

INDIA
HISTORICAL
AND
DESCRIPTIVE

BY G. H. LEEMAN.



Division DS413

Section E22

No. ~~4000~~ 4000

India, Historical and Descriptive

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

<https://archive.org/details/indiahistorical00eden>



TRAVELLING IN INDIA.

INDIA HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE

REVISED AND ENLARGED

FROM "LES VOYAGES CELEBRES"

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE SEPOY MUTINY

IN 1857-8

BY CHARLES H. EDEN

AUTHOR OF "RALPH SOMERVILLE," "THE TWIN BROTHERS OF ELFVEDALE," &c.

Numerous Illustrations and a Map



London:

MARCUS WARD & CO., 67 & 68, CHANDOS STREET
AND ROYAL ULSTER WORKS, BELFAST

1876

CONTENTS.

THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

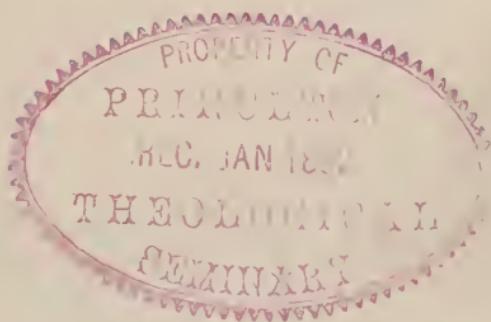
	PAGE
CHAPTER I.—Early History—Discovery by Vasco de Gama—Establishment of European Colonies,	9
CHAPTER II.—Geographical Description of Hindostan—The Monsoons,	23
CHAPTER III.—Antiquity of Hindostan—Population—The Khonds,	29
CHAPTER IV.—The Four Castes—The Thugs—Loss of Caste,	34
CHAPTER V.—Restoration to and Antiquity of Caste—Religions—The Brahmins—The Pahvahdam,	50
CHAPTER VI.—Followers of Siva—Metempsychosis—Hindoo Belief as to Future State,	62
CHAPTER VII.—The Gurus or Priests—Fakirs—Prayers—Sorcerers—The Evil Eye,	73
CHAPTER VIII.—Education of the Brahmins—Asking Alms—Ceremonials,	85
CHAPTER IX.—Enervating Influence of Climate—The Hindoos, their Character, Appearance, and Dress,	95
CHAPTER X.—Cities, Villages, and Houses—Salutations—Politeness—Games—Travelling,	107
CHAPTER XI.—Marriage—Widows—Suttees—Adoption,	118
CHAPTER XII.—Fairs and Festivals—Medicine—Literature—Music—Architecture,	134
CHAPTER XIII.—Domestic Slavery—Coinage—Nomads and Pariahs,	149
CHAPTER XIV.—Cisganggetic India—The Parsees—The Brahmo-Somâj—Cashmere—Scinde, &c.,	154
CHAPTER XV.—Agra and Delhi—Benares—Calcutta—The Deccan—Bombay—Ceylon—Elephant-hunting,	179

THE SEPOY MUTINY OF 1857-8.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Rising of the Storm,	210
CHAPTER XVII.—Outbreak at Meerut—The Siege and Fall of Delhi,	219
CHAPTER XVIII.—Calcutta, Benares, and Allahabad,	236
CHAPTER XIX.—Cawnpore—Nana Sahib,	250
CHAPTER XX.—Lucknow and the Re-establishment of Order,	278

Illustrations.

PAGE		PAGE	
Travelling by Palanquin, <i>Frontis.</i>		116	
Map of India, . <i>To face p. 9.</i>			
Tiger,	24	Cheetah, or Hunting Leopard, 117	
Scene in the Himalayas,	24	Tomb of Runjeet Sing, Lahore, 130	
Ibex,	26	Sultan Mahomet Shah's Mau-	
Young Lady of Southern India,	26	soleum,	132
Banyan Trees,	28, 30	Feast of the New Moon,	136
Serpent Charmers,	31	Feast of the Goddess Kali,	141
Indian Landscape,	33	Indian Temple,	146
Brahmin, Warrior, and Sudra,	35	Water Palace, Mandu,	148
Types of the Natives,	38	Parsee Lady and her Son,	157
Brahmin saying his Prayers,	43	Banks of the Indus,	163
Climbing Date Palm Trees,	49	Street in Mooltan,	169
Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu,	55	Patna, from the Ganges,	173
Vishnu the Destroyer,	57	Entrance to Hindoo Temple,	178
Serpent Worshippers,	58	The Kootub Minar, Delhi,	181
Animals of India,	61	Interior of Temple, Benares,	185
Gate of the Temple of the Sun, Juggernaut,	62	Government House, Calcutta,	186
Dying Brahmin holding a Cow's Tail,	67	Calcutta in 1845,	187
Indian Fakirs,	78	Bombay,	190
Hindoo Pagoda,	80	Cocoa-nut Grove, Ceylon,	194
Dancing-girl,	83	Talipat Palm, Ceylon,	195
Indian Cattle,	89	Ambustella Dagoba, Ceylon,	196
Indian School,	100	Captured Elephant,	198
Young Lady of Burmah,	101	Elephant-hunting,	201
Young Woman of Madras,	102	Bungalow,	209
Woman with Earrings,	105	Sikh Trooper,	212
Oriental Verandah,	108	King's Palace, Delhi,	222
Street in Lahore,	109	Peshawur Guide,	231
Indian Palace,	109	Bazaar in Calcutta,	237
Oriental Hand-mill,	111	Nana Sahib,	250
Travelling "Dawk,"	114	Scene of Massacre, Cawnpore,	270
		Mosque in Cawnpore,	274
		Affghan Officer,	277
		The Residency, Lucknow,	278



INDIA
OR
HINDUSTAN

Scale of English Miles





INDIA, HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE.

PROPERTY OF
PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY.

CHAPTER I.

Obscurity of the Earliest Historic Records—Discovery by the Portuguese Traveller, Vasco de Gama, in 1497—Account of his Voyage—Mozambique—Melinde—Calicut—Captivity of the Portuguese—Return of Vasco de Gama—The Establishment of European Colonies in India.



VEN among those of our countrymen who are most indifferent to the past and present condition of the Empire, there are few in whose breasts a feeling of interest remains unawakened when the most magnificent appanage of the British Crown—India—is mentioned. Its history for the last century has been intimately bound up with our own, its wealth has enriched many of us, and its battle-fields have developed the military talents of some of our greatest generals.

Yet, for many years, little was known of India in this country beyond its name. So great indeed was the apathy

manifested by all classes regarding it, that Lord Macaulay, in the opening to one of his most vigorous essays, writes, “We have always thought it strange that, while the history of the Spanish Empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest.”

No such charge can, with justice, be brought against us at the present day. The steam-engine, and the facilities afforded by it for travel; the electric wire; the increase of education; and last, but not least, the appalling tragedies wrought by the rebel Sepoys in 1857, have all combined to awaken a steady and growing interest in the smallest matters that concern our Eastern Empire, and in no page of our national history does Anglo-Saxon enterprise, determination, and valour shine more pre-eminently bright than in the annals of Hindostan since its occupation and the administration of its laws by Great Britain.

We cannot determine the exact limits assigned by the ancients to this vast and marvellous country, but we know that the people who were called Indians by the Greeks and Romans were those who professed, and to this day continue to practise, the religion of Brahma. This line of demarcation coincides with the natural frontiers—the Himalayas, the Indus, and the Ocean. These were the borders of the continental India of the ancients; and these are also the limits assigned by the Brahmins.

The conquest of India was attempted by Sesostris, Darius, and Alexander, but of the details of these events

we know little. Tradition, however, leads us to believe that art and science flourished amongst the Indians at a time when Egypt, Persia, and Greece had scarcely emerged from the depths of ignorance.

Nevertheless, chimeras and fables obscure even the few written memorials of the past which are bequeathed to us. The accounts which the authors of the *Râmâyana*, the *Bagavatta*, and the *Mahâbhârata* have transmitted of the chronology, the succession and duration of the various dynasties; of the heroes and their wars and prowess; of the revolutions of the country and their causes; of the earliest lawgivers; and of the invention and growth of the arts and sciences, are confused and buried amongst masses of fanciful tales, springing from that love of the marvellous which has always characterised the natives of India, a love which their earliest historians—poets, in the full force of the term—both flattered and encouraged.

But the various forms of their institutions, both civil and political; their knowledge of mathematics, and especially of astronomy; their systems of metaphysics and morals, and the renown of their philosophers, were famous from the earliest ages.

India was allowed by the ancients to be the cradle of a peculiar religion, attaching to its forms of worship all that was most mysterious and grand, and connected in its past history with the whole world. This may be regarded as the sole knowledge possessed by the civilised Western countries concerning a land destined in after ages to become most intimately connected with them, until, at the end of

the fifteenth century, the advent of Europeans served to dispel the darkness of the past, and to shed some light on the character and habits of a hitherto little known race.

From the beginning of the fifteenth century the Portuguese had been indefatigable in their explorations, and by 1484 had laid open the whole of the west coast of Africa, as far south as the river Congo. The object of the repeated expeditions sent forth from Lisbon was the discovery of a sea-route to India, for the only one then known was the toilsome and dangerous land journey through Egypt. The glory of discovering the Cape of Good Hope is too often erroneously attributed to Vasco de Gama, whereas the first European vessel that rounded the great African continent was commanded by Bartholomew Diaz, a Portuguese knight, who sailed from the Tagus in August, 1486. Mr. Cooley thus describes this eventful voyage, which, in the importance of its results, may almost vie with the discovery of America :—

“Having arrived at Sierra Parda, about two degrees beyond the southern tropic, and a hundred and twenty leagues beyond the farthest point visited by preceding navigators, Diaz erected a cross bearing the arms of Portugal; then, with a resolution worthy of the great object which he had in view, he steered due south through the open sea, and lost all sight of land. Forced at length to the east by heavy gales, he approached a bay which he named *Dos Vaqueros*, or *the Shepherds*, from the numerous flocks of sheep with their keepers which he descried upon the coast. He was now forty leagues to the east of the

Cape, which he had doubled unawares. Continuing his course to the east, he reached an island to which he gave the name of *Santa Cruz*, because he there erected a second cross. From time to time he sent ashore negroes whom he brought from Portugal, and who were well apparelled, in order that they might attract the respect of the natives: he also gave them merchandise of various kinds to exchange for the produce of the country, and instructed them especially to make inquiries respecting Prester John;* but the natives were so savage and so timid that nothing whatever could be learned from them. When the fleet, now reduced to two vessels, reached the Bay of Sagoa, the discontentment of the crews broke out into loud murmurings, insisting on their return. The stock of provisions was exhausted; the small vessel containing the stores had disappeared in the gales. Diaz, ignorant that he had already doubled that Cape which was the object of his search, entreated them to continue the voyage five-and-twenty leagues farther, representing to them how disgraceful it would be to return without success. The direction of the coast was now due east. The Portuguese at length arrived at the mouth of a river, which they called the *Rio do Infante*, at present the Great Fish River. But what was the joy and surprise of

* A mythical Christian king or emperor, whose territory was supposed to lie somewhere in the East. Tartary, Abyssinia, and the country to the eastward of the Bight of Benin were all, at various times, supposed to be the locality in which this monarch held sway. The subject is too lengthy to enter into here, but seems to have originated in vague reports derived from the Nestorian Christians, and greedily devoured by the credulous population of Western Europe.

Diaz and his companions, when, on their return along the coast, they descried, in the midst of their vexation and disappointment, the very promontory which they had so long been seeking in vain! They planted another cross, and dedicated the place to St. Philip. To complete their satisfaction they fell in with their store-ship, which had now only four men remaining of its crew, the remainder having been massacred by the savages on the coast. Diaz, after determining well the position of the Cape, returned to Lisbon, where he arrived in December, 1487, after having discovered above three hundred leagues of coast. On account of the violent tempests which he had encountered near the southern promontory, he gave it the name of *Carbo Tormentoso*, or the Stormy Cape; but the king, unwilling to deter seamen by such a sinister appellation, and auguring great advantages from this new discovery, gave it the name which it still retains—*The Cape of Good Hope.*"

Thus the turning-point of the ocean highway to the treasures of the East became known, and it will now be seen how prompt were the Portuguese—at that time perhaps the first maritime power in Europe—to follow the path their gallant countryman had opened out.

On the 8th of February, 1497, five years after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, Vasco de Gama, an intrepid Portuguese explorer, undertook the celebrated voyage which ended in the discovery of the sea-road to India.

An account of the first voyage of Vasco has been trans-

lated into French by M. Ferdinand Denis.* Its author was named Alvaro Velho, and his narrative shows him to have been an acute observer. Chosen as one of the twelve envoys destined to carry certain presents to the Sovereign of Calicut, he neglected no opportunity of recording his impressions of all that he saw, and of the excitement which the arrival of the foreigners caused in the Indian city; and his journal is the only trustworthy account which has been preserved to us of the various incidents which marked the travels of the illustrious Portuguese explorer.

On the 4th of November, 1497, the four ships despatched by Don Manuel, King of Portugal, and commanded by Vasco de Gama, came in sight of the western shores of Africa, and anchored in a bay which they named St. Helen's. Shortly afterwards they disembarked, finding men of a swarthy complexion, who ate only whales, gazelle venison, and the roots of plants. These savages were covered with skins, and had no other arms than horns hardened in the fire, and fastened to long poles obtained from the wild olive.

"The birds of this country are like those of Portugal," says the narrator; "there are to be found sea-gulls, turtle-doves, larks, and many other birds. The climate of the country is very temperate and healthy."

After having trafficked with the natives, and been the victims of a cowardly attack, the explorers pursued their way southward, and sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, surveying the coast in that neighbourhood and the sur-

* Unfortunately no English translation has yet been attempted.

rounding country, which was occupied by the *Gonaquas*, a Hottentot race now dispersed or mixed with other tribes. These tribes—congregating in numerous villages—were, and still are, exclusively devoted to pastoral occupations.

Vasco de Gama then returned to Natal, studied the manners of the Caffres, and proceeded to Mozambique, where the Mussulmans attempted to surprise the crews of the squadron, luckily in vain. After having escaped the treachery of the inhabitants of the neighbouring isles, the Portuguese bore up for Melinde, about thirty leagues from Monbaça. They found there four vessels from India, chartered and freighted by Asiatic Christians; and when some of their number were taken on board one of the Portuguese vessels, their attention was attracted by an image of the Virgin with the infant Jesus in her arms. They instantly prostrated themselves before it on the deck, and during their stay on board performed their devotions before the image, bringing presents of spices and other offerings. They were men of a swarthy complexion, lightly clad, and wore their beards and hair long. Some remnant of Hindooism seems to have adhered to them, for they abjured animal food.

The town of Melinde is built along the shores of a bay, and backed by large plantations of palm-trees. The houses are lofty and white.

Quitting Melinde (we are following step by step the account of Alvaro Velho), Vasco de Gama repaired to Calicut, which he found inhabited by native Christians.

The vague tradition which peopled India with Christians

is always in the thoughts of the narrator, and they did, indeed, exist within a short distance of Calicut, in the kingdoms of Cochin and Travancore. They are known in the Indies as Nazzarini or Syrians. Tradition asserts that they received Christianity from the apostle St. Thomas, who suffered martyrdom at the town of Meliapoar, sometimes called St. Thomas.

"These Christians," says Velho, "have a dark hue, fine hair, and long beards; some shave the head and wear only moustaches, whilst their ears are pierced, and they wear many gold ornaments. They are naked to the waist, and are cinctured round the loins with yards of loose cotton stuff. The women of this country are generally short, wearing on the bosom quantities of gold ornaments, and on the arms several massive bracelets of the same metal; their toes are adorned with rings, often set with precious stones. On the whole, the people are not ill-looking, but are very ignorant and avaricious."

Vasco de Gama sent word to the King of Calicut that the Portuguese ambassador had brought letters from his sovereign, which he would deliver to the king in person. Having received this message, the king bestowed rich stuffs on those who brought it, and replied that the Portuguese were welcome. They found his majesty surrounded by an eager and curious crowd of natives, so he stopped at the pagoda, which was a sort of large temple, constructed of faced stone, and covered with tiles. At the principal gate stood a bronze pillar, about the height of the mast of a ship, surmounted by the figure of a bird resembling a cock.

In the interior of this building was a small image, which the *cafis*, or priest, said was the Virgin, but which represented, without doubt, the Hindoo divinity *Maha-madja*. This deity, according to the creed of the Brahmins, died seven days after having given birth to her son Shakia ; but, in consideration of her being the mother of the chief of the gods, she was born a second time. Such was, in a few words, the Hindoo legend, which so far approximated to Christianity that, when combined with the costumes of the priests—much resembling those of our own Catholic countries—the holy water, and the ceremonies, it created in the minds of de Gama and his companions the strange notion that they were in a Christian land.

After visiting other places of interest in Calicut, de Gama had an interview with the king, who gave him a cordial welcome, but shortly afterwards shut up the whole party in prison. Their captivity, however, was of short duration, and they speedily returned to their own country, bearing a letter from the King of Calicut to their master. This letter was written on a palm leaf, with an iron pen, and was couched in the following terms :—

“ I have had the pleasure of welcoming to my realms Vasco de Gama, a gentleman of your household. My country produces abundance of cinnamon, cloves, ginger, pepper, and precious stones ; I desire to obtain from yours gold, silver, coral, and scarlet.”

This strangely laconic missive proves how lightly the Hindoo prince esteemed the new ambassador, and the European monarch whom he represented.

The close of the voyage was saddened by the death of Vasco de Gama's brother, but the little band of explorers reached Lisbon towards the end of August, 1499, when the commander was raised to the rank of admiral, and fêtes and rejoicings celebrated the return of the successful explorers. The news of the discovery of the Indies was officially announced at St. Siége, and in the towns and villages of the kingdom; and Don Manuel was named the Fortunate King.

We have thus far followed the narrative of Alvaro Velho, because it is not only the most authentic record of the time, but because it contains most valuable details of the state of India in the 16th century, and possesses, on many other accounts, a real interest of its own.

The Portuguese very soon revisited the shores of Hindostan, where they quickly routed the troops of the King of Calicut, built fortresses, established factories, made themselves masters of a considerable portion of the coast of Malabar, and in a very few years monopolised the entire commerce between the East Indies and Europe. But by their fanaticism, and the cruelties and tyranny engendered by an unquenchable thirst for proselytising the nations over whom they threw their yoke, the conquerors rendered themselves odious to the inhabitants. This intolerance, combined with the Spanish alliance, led to the ruin of their colonies at the end of about a century, by exposing them to the attacks of the enemies of Spain.

The Dutch, entering the country, gained a victory over a combined Spanish and Portuguese fleet, and were welcomed

by the natives as friends, almost as deliverers. The thrifty Hollanders struck whilst the iron was hot, and at once founded the Dutch East India Company.

Almost at the same time England began to carry on commercial transactions with India, whilst the French, who up to that time had made fruitless attempts to establish a footing, succeeded in acquiring certain possessions, the chief of which, Pondicherry, soon arose to considerable importance.

During the first half of the 17th century, the Dutch made but little progress; but ere its close they had seized all the Portuguese settlements on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, with the exception of Goa. The French East India Company purchased the district of Pondicherry from the King of Bejapore; it was taken by the Dutch in 1692, but was restored in 1697, at the peace of Ryswick.

But it must not be supposed that the British—the nation that had given birth to a Drake, a Hawkins, and a Frobisher; who, from their insular position, and the preponderance of seaboard they possessed over any other European nation, held in hand a race of hardy seamen and fishers, whose life was one daily struggle with the stormy ocean—would sit down quietly whilst other countries were enriching themselves with the gold of Golconda. Far from it, but our ancestors broke themselves against an impossibility. “Take John Portingal’s route to the Indies!” our sailors cried. “No, we’ll see him further first; we’ll find out a road for ourselves.” And accordingly, year after year, a passage by the desolate region lying between America

and the North Pole was attempted by daring men, too many of whom, it is to be feared, perished in their rash attempts.

Nor was the north-east route by way of Siberia neglected, but its ice-bound waters repelled the most intrepid of our mariners, to whom it at last became evident that but one practicable road to the East existed, and that, if they wished to share in the wealth of the Indies, they must abandon their conflict with the frigid zone, and follow in the path of Diaz and de Gama.

On the last day of the last year of the 16th century (31st December, 1600), Elizabeth granted a charter to "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies;" and from this small society, combined for purely commercial purposes, arose the most powerful private body the world has ever known—a company with power to make peace or war on their own responsibility, with enormous armies at their back, and a political influence which was virtually unlimited. In 1613 permission was granted to the English to establish factories at Gogo, Ahmedabad, Cambay, and Surat, and in that year the future rulers of India first obtained a firm footing on the mighty promontory. From that time their advance was assured. The thin end of the wedge had been inserted, and our ancestors were fully determined to drive it well home. In 1612 the constitution of the Company was changed, and it became a joint-stock company, with a fixed capital, managed by a governor and a board of directors. Into all the details of the earlier struggles of the East India Company

it would be impossible to enter in this volume. They soon beat the Portuguese out of the field, though the Dutch proved tougher antagonists. A factory was established at Armegon, on the Coromandel coast; but when, in 1639, a small tract of land was granted to Sir Francis Day, the Company's servants moved to it, and ran up Fort St. George, around the walls of which arose the city of Madras, the present populous capital of one of the three Presidencies. Calcutta was occupied by the English in 1645, and Bombay in 1665, as chief establishments, but for many years Madras remained the centre of government, and all business of importance was conducted at Fort St. George.

In 1698 a new East India Company arose, and, on offering to lend two millions of money to the Crown, received a Royal Charter. But though the field was broad enough to hold half-a-dozen companies, the rivals entered without delay into such a course of bickering and mutual jealousy, that Parliament was compelled to interfere, and by an Act passed in 1702 they became amalgamated.

The above is a brief account of the European colonisation of India, and since that period no single event of importance has taken place in that country with which the British were not intimately connected.





CHAPTER II.

Geographical Description of Hindostan—The Himalayan Range—
Cashmere—The Monsoons.

BEFORE we examine the customs of this country, which seems a world apart from the rest of the universe, we must first consider it from a geographical point of view.

The name of India, or the East Indies, is given to two large tracts of country in the south of Asia, separated by the Ganges, and called, the one Cisgangetic India, or Hindostan; the other Transgangetic, or Chinese India. The continent of India is separated from Thibet by the grand chain of the Himalayas, which possesses the loftiest mountains in the world. The two great rivers, the Indus and the Brahniapootra, form the east and west frontiers of India; it is bounded on the other sides by the ocean.

At one extremity of this immense empire reigns excessive cold, at the other tropical heat; the fruits of the temperate zones and the pines of the far north are equally natives of the soil; two harvests may be gathered in each year in one district, another is covered with burning sands. The interior

of the country is fertilised by innumerable rivers, and is richly carpeted with verdure. Bengal especially offers a spectacle of unheard-of beauty and richness. The province of Allahabad is also as fertile as Bengal.

Beyond the valley of the Ganges lies that of the Jumna, where rice and cereals are cultivated, and which produces also sugar, opium, indigo (the most precious of dyes), and cotton. Side by side with these regions stretch indescribable and impenetrable forests and jungles, the latter composed of thorns and gigantic bamboos, sometimes rising to a height of eighty feet.

In the cultivated provinces wild animals are rarely to

be seen ; but in the jungles elephants, bears, and several species of the tiger tribe abound.

At the foot of the snow-capped mountains in the chain of the Himalayas are pestilential



marshes, formed by the descending torrents finding no outlet to the sea. The English settlements at Nepaul and Bhootan have suffered severely from the unhealthiness of the climate, engendered principally by deficient natural drainage.

M. Xavier Raymond, in his *résumé* of the observations of the most celebrated travellers, states that the highest terrace of the Himalayas possesses a climate resembling



SCENE IN THE HIMALAYAS

that of the north of Europe or America, becoming more rigorous as it ascends, until, at the highest point, it can be compared to nothing but the eternal snows of the Arctic regions.

Even at the lower part of this plateau the snow does not melt until the overpowering heat sets in, in the months of May and June, when the traveller is scorched by the fierce rays of the sun at the same time that he is suffering from the intense cold. Yet vegetation is most abundant, and, at the height of 12,000 feet above the sea, barley and wheat are cultivated with success. Captain Webb relates that at this elevation he found magnificent forests of oak, ripe strawberries, vines in blossom, and excellent pasturage.

The rugged sides of the mountains are clothed with pine, cypress, and cedar trees, while many European shrubs, such as the gooseberry and raspberry, are found, intermingled with wild roses, lilies of the valley, primroses, and various kinds of wild flowers. A great elevation by no means detracts from the fertility of the soil, for the village of Nako, situated 12,000 feet above the level of the sea, on the northern side of the Himalayas, is renowned for the exceeding richness of its wheat and barley harvests.

These high regions abound with the smaller feline tribes, asses, ibex, wild boars, and musk deer; and the forests afford a secure shelter to the numerous birds which everywhere make the air jubilant.

Sometimes a plain stretches itself amidst the mountains, such as the little kingdom of Cashmere, held by many travellers to be a terrestrial paradise in miniature. Here

numberless mountain streams water the valley, producing the richest vegetation ; and, joining in the middle of the plain, they form a lake, adorned by all that is most exquisite



THE IBEX.

in nature. On the borders of this sheet of water the Moguls have erected many beautiful palaces, to which they retreated when overwhelmed by the cares of government. Its charms have been frequently sung by the eastern poets, who especially extol the beauty of the "Rose of Cashmire." But of all the

stately edifices which formerly embellished the centre of this famous valley, one only remains.

Such glowing descriptions have been often regarded as exaggerations ; but in 1835 Baron Hugel visited the vale, and maintained that it would be impossible to say too much in praise of so charming a country.

In Cashmere are cultivated most of the European plants. Planes, vines, poplars, and other trees indigenous to a more temperate zone, are also to be found there.

The beauty of the daughters of Cashmere is famed throughout Asia. The French traveller, Jacquemont, considers that the personal appearance of the women has been overrated, but admits that most of them have splendid dark liquid eyes, and adds that they are frequently sold in their infancy.



YOUNG LADY OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

The defiles of the mountains leading into Thibet are most difficult to traverse ; but the industry of man has succeeded in opening a path—narrow and perilous, indeed, but capable of permitting the droves of goats and sheep, with the treasures of India and Thibet bound upon their backs, to thread the narrow passes between the two countries.

We have said that the climate was either excessively hot or very cold ; yet the Indian year has three divisions—the hot, the cold, and the rainy seasons. The latter begins in June and ends in October, the cold season lasts from November to February, and the hot season from March to the end of May. The excessive heat is tempered during six months of the year by the periodical winds or monsoons which prevail over the whole of India.

The approach of the monsoon, according to Mr. Elphinstone, may be perceived by masses of clouds which rise out of the Indian Ocean, and thicken as they near the land. After some days of gloomy weather, the sky becomes cloudy, as though threatening rain, and the monsoon usually begins during the night. It announces itself by several violent claps of thunder, accompanied by gales of wind, and succeeded by a deluge of rain. The lightning continues without interruption for many hours.

The following day nature presents a dismal appearance, for the rain is so heavy that but very few yards can be seen in advance. The rivers carry down with them everything that lies in their way, and flood the country for miles round. This deluge lasts for several days, but at last the

sky clears, and the landscape again becomes visible, refreshed as if by magic.

Before the tempest comes, the earth is burnt up by the sun ; not an atom of verdure is visible, excepting perhaps in the dry beds of the rivers ; and the sky is entirely cloudless. “The atmosphere is charged with impenetrable dust, through which the sun appears large and red, as if seen through a winter fog ; a wind, burning as though coming out of a furnace, heats—even in the shade—wood, iron, and stones ; a few days before the monsoon, this wind is replaced by a calm even more unbearable. But, now that the first violence of the storm has passed, the earth becomes covered as by magic with fresh vegetation, the rivers have returned to their beds and pour their fertilising waters through the plains, the air is pure and delicious, the sky is beautified by the loveliest clouds, and all nature appears to revive.”

After this outbreak the rains continue with few intervals until the end of July, become more rare in September, and cease altogether early in October, in the midst of storms such as those which ushered them in.

The monsoon does not of course extend over the whole of India, but varies in the different divisions, for the mountains, by arresting the clouds, naturally produce local variations ; yet these periodical rains prevail over most of the country.



BANYAN TREES.



CHAPTER III.

Ancient History of Hindostan—Its Antiquity—Population—The Khonds.

HAVING thus taken a bird's-eye view of this immense Empire, it may be useful to detail certain general ideas concerning its ancient history.

If we accept the opinion that the highest regions of the world were peopled before others, we may—without going so far as to place the Garden of Eden in the valley of Cashmere or on the fertile hills of Sirmour—venture to believe that India was the country earliest cultivated and civilised, and first formed into families and tribes.

In no other portion of the globe have men found such abundant nutrition as on the banks of the Ganges; nowhere else have they discovered a climate mild enough to render it unnecessary to destroy animals for the sake of clothing themselves in their skins or their fleeces. In that country there was no need to dispute the possession of a fountain or a rich field; it was almost unnecessary to build a house, in a land in which a banana or a palm tree afforded sufficient shelter from sunshine or storm.

We find a proof of the antiquity of India in the books

of Moses, where we read of the wood of the aloe and ebony, and of cinnamon and precious stones—all products of this country.



BANYAN TREE.

The facts which are related concerning the expedition of Alexander help to enlighten us, and prove that the civilisation of India, though not very clearly recognised, had at that epoch advanced considerably.

The political and religious systems in India at the time of Alexander were, in fact, identical with those prevalent in Hindostan at the present day. The very same superstitions as those we now meet with existed then, and all the most remarkable of the religious orders—such as the Fakirs—mentioned by the Macedonians are seen and described by the travellers of our own time. Some lived in the forests, clothed in the bark of trees, and nourished by the roots; others carried serpents about with them, told fortunes, and sold wonderful remedies. The ancient writers describe one man who lay the whole day long stretched on the ground, apparently unconscious of the torrents of rain

which were falling. Another stood naked on the sharp edge of a rock, exposed to the fierce rays of the sun and the stings of countless insects. Each of these visionaries allowed his hair to grow to a great length, but took no pains to keep it clean.

Strabo will not allow the truth of the assertion that the Indians could bend their fingers backwards, and so reverse their toes as to enable them to walk on the upper part of



SERPENT CHARMERS.

the foot. This was, however, constantly done by these fakirs. Many of the existing customs amongst the Indians, such as the immolation of widows upon the tombs of their husbands, the wearing of ivory rings and of slippers of white leather, may be traced back to the most remote times.

The political and religious institutions of Hindostan seem to have existed thousands of years before the present

era. And yet, great though their antiquity may be, we can find no authentic proof of their existence beyond the time of Moses. The most ancient of their sacred writings, the Vedas, scarcely date back to that period.

The most remarkable fact in the history of this people is their fidelity to their creeds, their laws, and their institutions, notwithstanding the invasions to which they have been so constantly subjected.

The population of British India, as shown by the census of 1872, numbers over one hundred and ninety-one millions of inhabitants of all denominations. Amongst these we may name Tartars and Mongolians, Affghans, Beloochees, who seem to have come originally from Africa; Malays, Persians, particularly the fire-worshippers or "Guèbres;" Arabs, and Jews, both black and white. Many coloured Portuguese, the descendants of a mixed race of Europeans and Hindoos, are to be found scattered throughout the Deccan, Bengal, and the coast of Malabar.

The true natives of the soil are the Hindoos, or the descendants of the ancient Indians, who still occupy the largest and finest portion of the country. But there are other Hindoo tribes which live amongst the mountains and forests, and are distinct from the foreign races, though their primitive character is lost. Many of the peculiarities of these tribes were known to the ancient writers.

Herodotus relates that the tribes of the Padai not only ate raw flesh, as is the custom amongst some of the hunting tribes to this day, but they also killed the old people, put the flesh upon a spit, and devoured it.

Whatever might have been the practice in the days of the old historian, such unnatural customs are extinct now; though only within the last thirty years have the Government succeeded in stopping human sacrifices amongst the Khonds. A full and interesting account of these tribes has been written by Major-General Campbell, who was mainly instrumental in the ultimate suppression of this barbarous custom.



INDIAN LANDSCAPE



CHAPTER IV.

Ethnological Classification—The Four Castes—Peculiar Customs of certain Tribes—The Thugs—Right-hand and Left-hand Sects—Advantages of the Division into Castes—Expulsion from the Caste—Causes of Loss of Caste.

BEFORE beginning to study the Hindoos as a nation, we must premise that they belong to the first variety of the human race. They are more closely connected with the European nations than with the Persians or Arabs, by the formation of the head, the features of the face, and the proportion of the limbs. But the skin never attains to the whiteness and flesh colour of the European complexion. The inhabitants of the middle of the peninsula are almost black, those who live amid the mountains of the North are many degrees lighter, but the olive tint prevails throughout the whole country.

The Hindoos of the South are less vigorous than their northern brethren, being weakened and enervated by their constant adherence to a fruit and vegetable diet, to which the followers of Brahma are limited. The Mussulmans, who, on the contrary, live on meat, are remarkable for their strength and activity. Generally speaking, the country people are honest and religious; those living in the towns

are not so well spoken of; whilst the most corrupt are those employed under Government. Sober and indolent, they are contented with moderate salaries, though they are quick to profit by the example of Europeans; and by the expression of the most patriotic sentiments, and a dignity peculiar to themselves, they seem to hold their rulers in contempt, while they recognise the value of their institutions and laws.

We now arrive at the subdivision of the Hindoo nation into religious sects or *castes*—a curious system, of which most Europeans have heard, though few are thoroughly acquainted with its peculiar rites and ceremonies.

The Hindoos recognise only four pure castes—the Brahmins, who exercise all ecclesiastical functions; the military class; the Kshatriya, or Vaisyas, who cultivate the ground, and undertake all agricultural and commercial pursuits; and, lastly,



BRAHMIN, WARRIOR, AND SUDRA.

the Sudras, or slaves and labourers. After these comes the Pariah caste, of which, joined with the Sudras, nine-tenths of the inhabitants are composed. Properly speaking, the Pariahs cannot be regarded as a caste, for the term is employed amongst the Hindoos to designate the lowest class of the population, who are held far inferior to the Sudras, and regarded with universal abhorrence by the other natives. They perform the duties of scavengers, porters, &c., and in many cases sell themselves, with their wives and children, to the farmers, who use them with extreme severity. A Hindoo who loses caste is ranked with the Pariahs, a degradation accounted worse than death. These people are supposed to be the descendants of aboriginal tribes conquered years ago, and are computed to comprise one-fifth of the entire population of Hindostan.

These castes naturally subdivide themselves into numerous classes, for the prejudice of the country forbids a member of one caste defiling himself by undertaking the duties of another.

According to the statements of Abbé Dubois (whom we may believe trustworthy, for he lived many years in India, and had his book translated by command of the East India Company), some of these castes have certain customs which are most peculiar.

In Marava, a territory bordering on the sea, there is a caste called *Calaris*, or robbers. The peculiar profession of these people is hereditary, and is not considered ignominious; to steal is by them held as lawful, and a part of their duty. So far from shrinking from the appellation, if

one of them be asked who he is, he will coolly answer that he is a robber. Indeed the tribe is accounted one of the most distinguished among the Sudras, in the province of Madura, where it flourishes.

There is another caste, the Abbé proceeds to say, in the same province, called *Totiyars*, in which brothers, uncles, nephews, and other kindred, when married, enjoy the wives in common.

In the east of the Mysore there is a tribe known by the name of *Morsa-Hokula Makulu*, in which, when a mother gives her eldest daughter in marriage, she herself is forced to submit to the amputation of the two middle fingers of the right hand, as high as the second joint; and, if the mother of the bride be dead, the bridegroom's mother must submit to the cruel ceremony. In many other districts there are castes famous for practices no less irrational than those above mentioned.

In general, it may be remarked that, in addition to those ceremonies, civil and religious, which are constant and invariable, and unite the whole race in things essential, there is no tribe that does not exhibit some particular and local varieties of its own by which it is discriminated from the rest. Some distinguish themselves by the cut and colour of their clothes, some by the manner in which they put them on; others are remarkable for some peculiar shape of their trinkets, and others by the arrangement of them, on different parts of the body, in particular modes. In some you will observe certain peculiar forms in celebrating the ceremonies of marriage or of mourning; and in others the

decorations and the flags of various colours which are their distinction on similar occasions.

Extravagant, however, as many of their modes and customs are, they never draw down from castes of the most opposite habits and fashions the least appearance of contempt or dislike. Upon this point there is, through the whole of India, the most perfect toleration, as long as the general and universally respected laws of good behaviour are not infringed. With this exception, every tribe may freely, and without molestation, follow its own domestic course, and practise all its peculiar rites.

It may perhaps be well to mention here that the word "caste" is a Portuguese term (*casta*, a breed) which has been adopted by Europeans in general to denote the different classes or tribes into which the people of India are divided.

In Travancore, and only there, is to be found the famous caste of the *Naimaes*, or *Nairs*, in which the women enjoy the privilege of having several husbands.

This also seems the appropriate place to mention more fully the detestable sect or tribe commonly called "Thugs," or "Phansegars."

This sect of assassins—now, happily, almost exterminated—followed their atrocious practices rather from religious motives than for the love of plunder. They were the worshippers of the goddess Kali, who presided over sensual indulgence and destruction. The Thugs numbered in their ranks members of every caste, and each individual had his own special duties to perform. The gangs were from a dozen to a couple of hundred strong, and were



TYPES OF NATIVES.

divided into various classes, under a *sirdar*, or leader, and a *guru*, or teacher. These classes were four in number—the spies, who were new to the craft, and learning their business; the *bhuttotes*, or stranglers; the *sothas*, or entrappers, who were frequently women; and the *lughaees*, or grave-diggers. Disguised as travelling merchants, the gang frequented some high road, and put to death every unfortunate native that the spies could entrap. Their usual instrument of destruction was the cord, or *rumal*, with which they strangled the victim, and, having stripped him of everything, handed the body over to the *lughaees*, who concealed it so dexterously that discovery was almost impossible. The plunder amassed was divided at the close of the expedition, one-third being apportioned to the goddess Kali, another third to the widows and orphans of the tribe, and the remainder to the parties principally concerned in the assassination. After a murder, the Thugs who had committed it united in a sacred rite or sacrament, called *tapounee*; and their bloodthirsty deity was always consulted before an expedition went forth. Neither old men, women, nor Europeans were ever victims, though the latter owed their immunity solely to the knowledge that a vigorous search would be instituted were they found missing. There were also bands of Mahomedan Thugs, and it has been conjectured the system of *thuggee* originated with the Moslem banditti, though it eventually became more Hindoo than Mahomedan. Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sahib both sought to exterminate this diabolical sect, and the East India Company took the matter in hand as early as 1810. It

was not, however, until the administration of Lord William Bentinck, in 1827–35, that the gangs were effectually broken up. During that period over fifteen hundred persons were condemned as Thugs, many of whom were executed or transported, while others turned approvers, and made known to the world the mysteries of their sect, and the deep root it had obtained in India. The families of these cold-blooded murderers were placed under Government surveillance, and their children taught such trades as enabled them to get their living. Many interesting books have been written on this subject, amongst which we may quote the works of Sir William Sleeman, who was mainly instrumental in their suppression, and *The Confessions of a Thug*, by Captain Meadows. Their theory is also admirably and concisely set forth by Monsieur de Lanoye, author of *L'Inde Contemporaine*, who describes a Thug as speaking as follows:—“ You Europeans find pleasure in attacking a wild beast in his den, or in hunting a tiger to death, both of which may be done without braving any dangers, or displaying any courage. But consider how the attraction is redoubled when the object of your pursuit is man, when it is a human being whom you must destroy! Then it is necessary to display not courage only, but also prudence, cunning, and diplomacy. Is it not sublime to play upon the victim's passions, to make the cords of love and of friendship vibrate, in order to allure the prey into one's net? It is more than this—it is intoxicating, maddening.”

The use of intoxicating liquors is universally forbidden;

yet the inhabitants of the forests and mountains on the coast of Malabar, including women and children, drink the brandy of the country and the juice of the palm, obtaining both through the merchants, who supply them with a small quantity each day on payment of a certain sum. But it should be remarked that a practice so opposed to the ideas entertained by the surrounding districts exposes these people to the scorn and opprobrium of the whole nation.

The Brahmins are not permitted to drink alcohol, under penalty of loss of caste, and are obliged to confine themselves to smoking opium.

Both opium and brandy are, doubtless, beneficial in the marshy districts as a protection from the pestilential vapours arising from them ; and probably nothing but necessity could have induced the inhabitants of these regions to break down one of the most venerable barriers of Hindoo civilisation.

Certain tribes have one very peculiar domestic law. It is unlawful for any one to change or to wash his linen, which must never be taken off the body until it falls away in shreds. The effect in four or five months may be imagined. If a man broke this law by merely dipping his clothes into water, he would be at once expelled from the caste. There may be a certain explanation of this repulsive custom in the fact that the only water in the country is in stagnant pools, which would be easily tainted, and made unfit for drinking purposes.

There are also some religious observances purely local. For instance, in the west of Mysore, Monday takes the

place of the Sunday of all Christian countries as the one day of rest in the seven. All ordinary work is suspended, especially the employment of cattle, for the day is sacred to *Baswa*, or the Bull, to whom special worship is offered.

High-caste Hindoos usually marry into their own family. A widower will marry his sister-in-law, and an uncle his niece; and a man has power to prevent a relative from marrying any but himself. But it is a rule, universally and invariably observed in all the castes from the Brahmin to the Pariah, that the male line shall always cross the female line—that is to say, the uncle may take to wife his sister's daughter, but by no means his brother's; the children of the brother may intermarry with those of the sister, but not the children of two brothers, or of two sisters. Those who cannot arrange a convenient alliance in their own family are obliged to marry, not only in their own caste, but in that subdivision of it to which they belong.

These subdivisions are difficult to classify, for the same caste is despised in one district and respected in another, according to the conduct or position of its members. The caste to which the prince of the country belongs, though it may be of little reputation elsewhere, is elevated to the highest rank in that principality, and all those belonging to it participate in the *éclat* given to it by the dignity of its chief.

The tribes most respected are those in which property is considered sacred, and where the laws of marriage, with its customs and privileges, are most strictly observed. This explains the respect everywhere accorded to the Brahmins,

who to the practice of these virtues add that of abstinence, never eating meat, or anything containing the principle of life.

The most abject and despised among the Sudras are those tribes who permit the marriage of widows, a custom contrary to the prejudices of all other castes, excepting the Pariahs. Certain castes, principally among the Brahmins, are distinguished by marks on the forehead, or other



BRAHMIN SAYING HIS PRAYERS.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

parts of the body. A narrow belt of thread, suspended like a sash from the left shoulder to the right hip, always denotes the three highest of the four great tribes.

But another division, of comparatively recent introduction, has arisen, and is very general in the southern provinces, namely, the *Right-hand* and the *Left-hand* sects; and this distinction—by whomsoever invented—is the source of countless quarrels and jealousies, and is a continued principle of hatred and animosity among all the members of the community.

The *Left-hand* includes the merchants, artisans, and lower orders, and even the most despised class—the Chakili, or cobblers. All the most distinguished castes of the Sudras and the Pariahs, who are most formidable, belong to the *Right-hand* side.

The Brahmins and Rajahs, claiming the privilege of both hands, never mix themselves up with the rivalries caused by the demand for certain rights considered to belong exclusively to each party, but they are occasionally chosen as arbitrators.

Often terrible outbreaks occur between the rival sects of the usually quiet and timid Hindoos, and peace is seldom restored without considerable bloodshed. The most absurd and childish motives are sufficient to cause a frightful contest amongst these miserable fanatics. If an adherent of the *Left-hand* or *Right-hand* appear in slippers when he should not do so; if he ride on horseback, or in a palanquin, or play upon a particular instrument, or wear a certain coloured cloth, his opponents seize the opportunity to commence the fray, and involve the whole tribe in slaughter and ruin. One of the most formidable of these *emeutes* was occasioned by the stupidity of a cobbler, who appeared

at a public ceremony with red flowers in his turban, a privilege claimed exclusively by the Pariahs of the *Right-hand*.

The history of these castes may be obtained by referring to a code of laws bearing the name of Menu, and probably belonging to the ninth century before Christ.

Four classes we have already mentioned—viz., the priesthood, the military, the artisans, and the tillers of the soil. The three first, though not on an equality, enjoy certain peculiar prerogatives. They are, so to speak, that part of society for the benefit of which the laws and government are established. The last-named caste exists only as the instrument whereby their more fortunate and better-born countrymen acquire riches and power, and possess neither rights nor privileges of their own.

A man belonging to the ecclesiastical caste—the Brahmin—is regarded as one of the most exalted of all created beings. The universe belongs to him; he holds in his own hands the lives of all men, and could give birth to new worlds; he should receive higher veneration than a king, for he disposes the fate of kings, and can annihilate them at one word, with their armies and their treasures. No punishment can be inflicted on him even for the greatest crimes. Fortunately for society, these priests, who pretend to exercise divine power, are enjoined by their laws to lead a life of study and austerity.

But before reviewing the lives of the Brahmins, we must return to the subject of castes, and relate the advantages which result from the divisions of which we have spoken.

This classification, which seems at first to Europeans ridiculous and dangerous, affords in reality great advantages. Indeed many people consider the institution of castes among the Hindoos as the happiest effort of their legislation; and hold the opinion that, if the people of India preserved and extended the sciences, the arts, and a high state of civilisation, when Europe was wallowing in miserable darkness, it is wholly to the distinction of castes that she is indebted for that high celebrity.

The conduct and manners of the Pariahs, who, acknowledging no moral tie, give themselves over to their brutal passions, prove how necessary to the well-being of the country were the restrictions enforced by the laws of castes.

Starting with the principle common to all ancient legislators, that no subject should be permitted to be useless to the state, those who divided the Indian nation into castes comprehended that they had to do with an indolent, careless people, whose apathy was favoured by the climate, and that the only way of preventing complete anarchy, and a relapse into barbarism, was to impose rigidly on each individual some peculiar profession or employment. The wisdom of this was evident, for, thanks to the union of religion with politics, superstition directed all the actions of life, and forced these indolent people to fulfil their duties, through respect for the sacred customs of their ancestors.

It may perhaps be brought forward as an objection, that a nation so highly endowed with taste, patience, and skill

would no doubt have attained to a higher degree of perfection if they had been otherwise trained ; but the wisest Europeans who have studied the Hindoo nation affirm that it is the authority of the castes alone which upholds order, for some amongst them have the power of life and death. For example, early in this century, a man of the Rajpoot tribe was compelled to put his own daughter to death, owing to her having been discovered in the arms of a youth.

So severe a punishment is rare, but when it is adjudged necessary, the father or eldest brother of the offender is obliged to inflict it secretly. Generally speaking, a fine or an ignominious sentence is sufficient. A woman who has lost her honour has her head shaved, and is driven round the town sitting on a donkey with her face to the tail, while the lookers-on pelt her with filth. But in very grave cases she is expelled from the caste—a most severe punishment, never resorted to unless the criminal has committed a heinous sin, throwing dishonour on the whole tribe.

Such expulsion is utter excommunication. The man who undergoes this sentence is entirely cut off from his fellows, and no more belongs to human society. He loses his friends and relations, sometimes even his wife and children, who prefer to desert him rather than to share his disgrace. He is a man dead to the world, for none may eat with him, or offer him so much as a cup of water ; his sons or his daughters can never marry ; he is shunned and pointed at by all. The very lowest caste would not receive

a Brahmin thus degraded ; all that is left for him is to join the most abject Pariahs, and take refuge in those districts chiefly inhabited by Europeans. Nevertheless, this dreadful punishment is sometimes inflicted by caprice, or even out of spite. It is noticeable that in most cases a Hindoo without caste becomes a thief.

If a Pariah, concealing his caste, were to mingle with other Hindoos, enter their houses, and eat with them, without being recognised, he would expose all those who had thus innocently communicated with him to be expelled from their caste, to which they could not be restored without undergoing an infinite number of ceremonies, both troublesome and expensive. The Pariah himself would be punished by instant death on the spot where his audacity was discovered.

A Sudra who associated with a Pariah woman would be expelled without mercy. There is an example of unparalleled severity cited as having occurred in the caste of the herdsmen. A girl was betrothed to a lad who died before the marriage could be concluded. Some time after, the parents gave their daughter in marriage to another man ; and, as this was a violation of the laws of society, the whole family lost caste, and none of its members ever married.

It is also related that eleven Brahmins, travelling through a country devastated by war, could no longer support the pangs of hunger, and at last cooked a little rice in a vessel, which they could not use without being polluted. They swore secrecy, but on their return home one of their number

who had refused to join in the sacrilegious repast informed against them. The accused affirmed, as they had agreed, that the informer himself had alone committed the offence which he wickedly imputed to them ; and, as the evidence of ten people outweighs that of one, the denouncer alone was punished.





CHAPTER V.

Restoration to Caste—Antiquity of Castes—Religions of Hindostan—The Brahmins—Distinctive Marks—Asking Alms—Sect of Vishnu—The Pahvahdam.

FROM what has been said, it will be easily understood why the Hindoos cling to their castes as the European gentry do to their rank ; and the greatest insult that can be offered to a man is to say he belongs to no caste. The contempt which they express for Europeans is thus easily explained—they consider them no better than barbarians.

Exclusion from caste is not irremediable ; readmission may be purchased by several means—by payment of a fine, by submitting to public flogging, by promising to prove the sincerity of repentance by exemplary conduct for the future, and, lastly, by the *Sashtangam*, or prostration of the eight members of the body—that is to say, by lying with the face to the ground, and the arms stretched out. This salutation is performed before those of high rank, and kings prostrate themselves in this manner before their armies as they are about to begin the battle.

If the expulsion has been caused by criminal conduct, the ordeal of restoration is more painful. The tongue of the culprit is burnt with a piece of heated gold, or he is branded with a hot iron, or he is forced to run with naked feet over burning coals, or made to pass backwards and forwards under a cow's belly, or, lastly, he has to drink the *Panchakaryam*, a disgusting mixture composed of five substances that proceed from the body of a cow; and this liquor is the most effective purification. When these ceremonies are over, he must give a grand banquet to the Brahmins, and offer them presents, and after that he is restored to his former privileges.

There are, however, certain sins which can in no case be pardoned, such as eating the flesh of a cow. If such a fearful deed were committed, even by compulsion, the miserable delinquent would be universally abhorred, and held beyond all hope of redemption.

There is no institution in the world more ancient than this division of castes. The sacred books of the Hindoos state that when the world was peopled by the god Brahma, he produced the Brahmins from his head, the Kshatriya from his shoulders, the Vaisyas from his belly, and the Sudras from his feet. The books refer this event to the time of the deluge, and it is worthy of notice that they relate how Menu, their Noah, escaped from this disaster by the aid of a bird, accompanied by the seven famous penitents.

Concerning the fable, the Abbé Dubois says—"It is easy to perceive that this tale is a pure allegory, alluding not

only to the rank which the castes maintain in relation to each other, but also to the different functions of those who compose them. The Brahmins, no doubt, being generally engaged in the spiritual concerns of life, must have burst from the head of the creator. Power being the attribute of the Rajas (Kshatriya), who were ordained to the arduous duties of war, from whence could their origin be derived but from the shoulders and arms of Brahma? The merchants, solely occupied in providing food, clothing, and other necessaries of life, were no less appropriately drawn from the belly of the god; and the plodding Sudras, doomed to the humble drudgery of the field, were shaken out of his feet."

Many of the subdivisions of castes in Hindostan are comparatively modern; we shall have occasion to mention them presently.

We find the origin of the first great caste, the Brahmins, completely obscured by legends and fables. Their ancestors were the seven penitents, who, after giving to mankind an example of the greatest virtue, were taken up to heaven, and now form the group of seven stars known as the "Great Bear." It is impossible to determine the exact period of their establishment, or to trace it beyond the ninth century before the Christian era. Without entering at present into the peculiar customs of the Brahmins, we will next enumerate the different religions of the inhabitants of Hindostan.

First comes Brahminism, based upon the Vedas and Deism. Below the Supreme Being is placed the Trimurti,

or Trinity, composed of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. This religion is professed by one hundred and fifteen millions of people.

Buddhism counts even a larger number of adherents. At one period it became the national religion of India; but Brahminism speedily regained the upper hand, and by bloody persecutions drove the professors of Buddhism to take refuge in Java, and the Transgangetic countries, China, Japan, Thibet, and Mongolia. Buddhism also, which played the same part with regard to Brahminism as did Christianity with Judaism, had its reformation.

The reformer, Jainas the Victorious, gave his name to his religion. Jainism is divided into two sects. Their god is Pamavisa, a deity much resembling Buddha. The inferior gods are the souls of good men, transferred to the higher regions and called *Devatas*. They have borrowed two important tenets held by the Brahmins, viz., the transmigration of souls and the sacredness of the Ganges.

Nanekism, founded by Naneka towards the middle of the 15th century, holds a middle course between Brahminism and Buddhism. This is a sect of Iconoclasts; its followers, numbering about five millions, acknowledge or call themselves Sikhs, and profess Deism, and at the same time acknowledge the respect for animal life, however insignificant, shown generally throughout India.

Islamism was introduced at the time of the conquest of India by the Mussulmans, and numbers about seventeen millions of adherents. The Mussulmans of India are less fanatical and strict in their observance of the Koran than

their western brethren, for they drink both wine and alcohol. They have a religious order of Fakirs, or mendicant priests, and a sect called the Boias, who form a separate community.

If we mention Sabeism, or the worship of fire; Judaism, and Christianity, which are represented in India by a great number of sects, we shall have named all the religions which exist in that vast country, and will now return to the Brahmins.

Those of our day differ considerably from their ancestors. We read that the latter lived secluded lives as penitents and philosophers, entirely devoted to the cultivation of science and the practice of virtue. Their manners were simple, whilst their contempt of riches and honour, their sobriety and disinterestedness, gained for them the homage of the people and the respect of kings.

The Brahmins of the present day preserve, it is true, habits of fasting and abstinence from food and ablutions, but they are far from practising the virtues of their fore-fathers. And the chief point of separation is that they care for nothing but the worship of images, and have respect for little besides their idols.

Buddhism, which is probably only a corruption of the ancient religion of Brahma, has without doubt more adherents than any other religion in the world.

The chief of the Buddhists is the Grand Lama of Thibet, who never dies; a miracle which is arranged in this manner. When he is at the point of death the Bonzes make choice of an infant, into whose body they transfer the soul of the Grand Lama, proclaiming him to be the successor; and he

who does not believe this marvellous revival is no faithful Buddhist.

The Jainas are quite another kind of sect, who despise alike Brahmins and Buddhists ; and this antagonism has caused many religious wars not yet extinguished, and quite as cruel as the generality of those lamentable conflicts.

Still the dogma of metempsychosis is common to these three sects, and their ceremonial and services have many points of resemblance. The great tribe of the Brahmins is divided into seven branches, each one under the patronage



BRAHMA, SIVA, AND VISHNU.

of one of the seven penitents* we have before mentioned as escaping from the flood with Menu, and the whole subdivided again into four castes. Their priests wear distinctive marks, such as bands of various colours on the forehead, or marks of red-hot iron. Some amongst them are called derisively Fish Brahmins, others Meat Brahmins, from the different forms of nourishment which they adopt.

* A theory has been advanced that these seven penitents correspond with the seven sons of Japhet.

The Hindoos generally consider their two great divinities Vishnu and Siva as worthy of equal veneration, but sometimes one or other is selected for exclusive adoration. The devotees of Vishnu have three lines like a trident impressed upon the forehead, and called *Nama*; those of Siva hang round the neck or arm a small silver box containing an indecent image, and this symbol is termed the *Sing*. The former affect a peculiarity of costume: they wear linen dyed so dark a yellow as to be almost red; some have a kind of mantle over their shoulders, quilted and made of patches of various colours, and a turban to match; others, instead of the mantle, wear a tiger skin hanging down to the ground. Many twist long strings of black beads as large as nuts round their necks. When travelling, or on begging expeditions, they always wear a round plate of bronze, and a large shell called a *sankha*, with which they make a noise to announce their approach: they strike the bronze plate with a small stick, making a sound like a bell, and with the other hand hold the sankha to their lips, and by blowing through one end produce a sharp but monotonous sound. These followers of Vishnu also wear on their breasts a plate made of copper, on which is engraved the image of the monkey *Hanuman*, or one of the incarnations of their god, who, in common with most of the members of the Hindoo mythology, assumed certain mundane forms, which incarnations are commonly known as *Avatars*. In the accompanying woodcut, Vishnu is represented wielding an axe, with which weapon he is fabled to have exterminated the Kshatriya caste. Others

carry numberless little bells hanging from their shoulders, which, by tinkling, proclaim their arrival. Some add to all this an iron ring, which they carry on their shoulders, sustaining at each side a chafing-dish of the same metal, intended to hold the incense which they burn at their devotions.

It is not only the right, but the duty of each member of a religious order to demand alms; but these rights are not often made use of, unless they are making a pilgrimage to some sacred spot. Occasionally these pilgrims travel in troops of more than a thousand, scattering themselves in the villages which line their route. Each inhabitant is bound to lodge a certain number, and in this manner they defray the expense of the journey. They demand alms audaciously and often with insolent menaces,



and, if they are not instantly forthcoming, commence the most frightful uproar, howling, striking their bronze plates simultaneously, and drawing the most deafening notes from their sankhas. If these measures of intimidation are unsuccessful, they force themselves into the interior of the houses, break the earthen dishes, and carry off all they can lay hands on. They often excite public charity by performing wonderful dances, accompanied by indecent songs. Indeed the intemperance of these idolatrous priests, and of almost all the followers of Vishnu, causes them to be looked upon with suspicion and detestation by the people in general.

The worshippers of Vishnu are bound by no restrictions with regard to eating and drinking, and on certain occasions they assist at an abominable sacrifice called the *Sakta-puja*, which consists in assembling the sect in a temple, where they gorge themselves with food and alcoholic drinks, and give themselves up for a whole night to the most shameful excess. This sect offers special reverence to the Monkey, a bird of prey called the Garuda, and the serpent Capella, and none dare kill or maltreat one of these animals on pain of expiating his crime by the ceremony or sacrifice called the *Pahvahdam*. As the details



of this curious rite are but little known, we shall extract the Abbé Dubois' description of it.

"This ceremony is peculiar to the sect of Vishnu, and they resort to it only in circumstances of the weightiest kind, such as the necessity of expiating the crime of causing the death of any of the animals which are the objects of their worship, or for obtaining reparation for some breach of honour occasioned by any deep injury which an individual of their tribe may have received from some other person, and which would be felt as redounding to the disgrace of the sect if it remained unpunished. The Pahvahdam is a ceremony of the most serious kind, since it demands no less than the sacrifice of a human victim, and its resuscitation afterwards.

"As soon as it is publicly known that anyone has given occasion for the Pahvahdam, by any of the crimes that have been mentioned, or by any deep insult cast upon the sect, the votaries crowd from all quarters to the place where the culprit resides, and having assembled, sometimes to the number of more than two thousand, each bringing his sounding-plate of brass, and his sankha or great shell, they proceed to the ceremony. The first step is to arrest the person who is the cause of their assembling, and then they spread a tent at a small distance, which is immediately encompassed with several ranks of partisans assembled for the occasion.

"The chiefs, having selected from the multitude a fit person who consents to become the victim for sacrifice, exhibit him to the crowd of people collected from all parts

to witness the sight. A small incision is then made in his belly, deep enough for the blood to flow; upon which the pretended victim shams a fainting fit, tumbles on the ground, and counterfeits death. He is then carried into the tent which is fitted to receive him, and is there laid out as a corpse.

"Of the great concourse of people gathered together, part watches night and day round the tent, which nobody is suffered to approach, while another division surrounds the house of the individual who has given occasion for the ceremony. Both parties raise continual cries and frightful howlings, which, being mixed with the clanking sound of the brazen plates and the shrill squeak of the sankha, produce a confusion and uproar, in the midst of which it is almost impossible to exist. This overwhelming disorder continues without interruption till the person who was the cause of it pays the fine imposed upon him, which generally exceeds his means.

"In the meantime, the inhabitants of the village and of the neighbourhood, finding it impossible to live in the midst of the confusion and disorder occasioned by the fanatical crowd, come to terms with the chiefs, and pay at least a part of what has been required of the culprit, in order to obtain a speedy termination to the Pahvahdam, and to induce the great multitude to go to their homes.

"The chiefs, when satisfied, repair to the tent to conclude the ceremony, which is effected by restoring to life the pretended dead man, who lies stretched out before them. For this purpose they choose one of their number, and,

making an incision in his thigh, they collect the blood which runs from it and sprinkle the body of the sham corpse, which, being restored by the efficacy of this simple ceremony, is delivered over alive to those who assist at it, and who have no doubt whatever of the reality of the resurrection.

"After this ceremony, to efface all traces of the crime or the affront which had been complained of, the fine is laid out in a grand entertainment to all the persons present; and when that is over, the whole of them quietly return to their homes."

To show what trifling causes give rise to this sacrifice, the Abbé says, "It is not very long since the Pahvahdam was celebrated in a solemn manner in a village next to that where I lived. The cause from which it originated was, that an inhabitant of that village had cut down (without being aware of it, as it is said) a tree or shrub called *Kahkiay-mara*, which produces yellow flowers, and to which the sectaries of Vishnu offer up adoration and sacrifices."





CHAPTER VI.

Followers of Siva—Metempsychosis--Its uses—Hindoo Hell and Heaven.

THE sect of Siva is as much scattered over the country as that of Vishnu, and they predominate especially along the chain of mountains which separates the coast of Malabar from that of Coromandel. They, as well as the Brahmins, abstain from all animal food, and from anything which has contained the principle of life, eggs for example ; but, instead of burning their dead, as do most of the Hindoos, they bury them. They differ also in not admitting the general principles recognised by the other tribes concerning pollution and cleanliness ; in a word, their ablutions are few and very far between, which circumstance has given rise to the proverb, that “ there is no river for a Singarrite ” (or follower of Siva). But the most noticeable principle professed by this sect is the denial of metempsychosis. They do not celebrate the memory of their dead, but consign them to oblivion as soon as they are buried. They admit a relative equality ; their religion pronounces all men equal ; and to them a Pariah who has professed their faith is in no way inferior to a Brahmin.



GATE OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, JUGGERNAUT.

There are amongst them many religious mendicants, a few of whom live retired in *matas*, or convents, and cultivate the ground, the produce of which, together with the offerings of the devout, serve them for sustenance.

The Gurus, or priests of Siva—known in some parts by the name of Jangurus—are for the most part celibates, but practise celibacy in a peculiar way. When a Guru visits a district, he lodges at the house of one of the elders of the sect, who all contend for the honour of being his host; but when he has made his selection, the master and all other male inhabitants of the house are obliged to leave and find a lodging elsewhere. The holy man remains day and night alone with the women of the family, without exciting in the slightest degree the jealousy of the husbands. Still malicious people have been heard to remark that the good priests invariably select as their lodgings those houses which contain the youngest and prettiest women.

We have said that the Sivites do not believe the doctrine of metempsychosis; and, before entering into further details, we will explain this article of faith, which forms so fundamental a point in most of the Hindoo creeds. The doctrine is thus explained in the *Bagavatta*:—

“ Before Vishnu, the Supreme Deity, created the world as it exists, he formed souls who animated first chimerical bodies, and, during their union with them, either sinned or were virtuous, according to the bent of their inclination. After a long sojourn in these provisional forms, they had to appear before the tribunal of Yama, the Judge of the Dead, when those who had led virtuous lives were

admitted into Paradise, and those who had abandoned themselves to sin were condemned to hell. Those souls who had been half sinful and half virtuous were sent back to earth to animate other bodies, and to endure their pain, or receive their reward." So that one might judge, by the condition of a person in this generation, what had been his conduct in the previous one.

Those who died on holy ground departed at once to Paradise, and were not exposed to a second existence; but the other souls of men, after death, went to animate different bodies, such as an insect, a reptile, a bird, or a quadruped. It is to their good or bad works alone that souls are indebted for a transmigration more or less advantageous, as well as for the good or evil which they experience in the different states through which they pass.

To the same cause is attributed the distinctions observable amongst men. Some are rich, some poor, some ill, some in good health; here is happiness, there misery; here the highest rank, there degradation itself. None of these things is the effect of chance, but the result of the virtues or vices of the previous state of existence. Man is the highest creation of the gods; therefore to be born in that condition, of whatever caste, supposes a certain degree of merit. Among men the Brahmins hold the highest place, therefore the favour of animating the body of a Brahmin is accorded only to an accumulation of merit through many generations.

The punishments reserved for crime are terrible. He who slays a Brahmin's cow will after his death go to hell,

to be eternally tormented by hunger and thirst. After enduring horrible agony for millions of years, he will return to earth in the form of a cow, and remain in that condition as many years as there were hairs on the body of the cow which he killed. Finally, he will reappear as a Pariah, and be afflicted with leprosy for ten million years. The homicide of a Brahmin, whatever may have caused it, is a crime four times more heinous than that mentioned above. He who is guilty of it will be condemned after death to return in the form of an insect living on corruption. He will, finally, be born again a Pariah, and suffer blindness four times more years than there are hairs on a cow's body. But he may expiate his crime by feeding forty thousand Brahmins.

If a Brahmin were to kill a Sudra, his fault would be utterly wiped out by reciting a kind of prayer called the *gaitry* one hundred times.

He who kills an insect will himself become one after death ; he will afterwards be born a Sudra, and be subject to all sorts of infirmities.

A Brahmin who has cooked food for a Sudra, or ridden upon a bull, will go to hell immediately after death, and be there plunged in boiling oil, and bitten unceasingly by venomous serpents. He will be born again under the form of one of those birds of prey who devour dead bodies, and will remain a thousand years in that shape, and a hundred years in that of a dog.

This doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, is admitted not only in Asia, but in many other parts

of the world. Cæsar found it established among the Gauls.

It can be easily seen that those who believe in this doctrine dare not eat the flesh of any animal, lest they should be unwittingly devouring a former member of their family. This superstition arose from a law made by the earliest Indian legislators, whose object was the preservation of useful animals. India has not sufficient provender to support any large number of beasts, and if in that country they slew for food as large a proportion of cattle as they do in European countries, it would soon be impossible to cultivate the ground. Besides this, the heat is so intense during eight months of the year, and the drought so universal, that cattle often die of hunger, or are forced to seek nourishment from refuse matter, as pigs do. Also, putrefaction takes place very rapidly in so high a temperature, and the Hindoos have a natural repugnance to the flesh of animals which so quickly becomes corrupt. And added to this are the prejudices which are fomented by the priests, and the horror universally inspired in India by bloodshed (a horror so great as to extend protection even to the most repulsive reptiles), and we thus find a very true idea of the reason for the belief in transmigration.

Yet many of the Sudra castes do not scruple to slay certain animals and to use them for food, and they have butchers and huntsmen by profession; but this violation of a custom so reverenced draws upon them the contempt of the higher classes. It is a remarkable thing that cows are everywhere held sacred. Peacocks also are universally



DYING BRAHMIN HOLDING A COW'S TAIL TO ENSURE HIS ENTRANCE INTO HEAVEN.
SEE NEXT PAGE.

respected. The chief reason for the great reverence bestowed on cows is, that there is supposed to be a flood between this life and the next, and the only way of crossing this barrier is by holding on to the tail of a cow. The ancient lawgivers had perhaps seen the Egyptian herdsmen crossing the Nile, grasping by the left hand the tail of a buffalo or a cow; or perhaps this reverence for the cow arose from the fact that she yields the principal elements of sustenance among the Hindoos, milk and butter, and also because she is of use in husbandry.

At the outset, the system of metempsychosis seems to have been limited to the successive transition of souls into different human bodies. It was afterwards extended, and souls might find a dwelling in the bodies of animals and of all sentient things. The Platonists, provoked by the jests which were made upon the impropriety of sending the soul of a king into the body of a monkey, and that of a queen into the body of a grasshopper, tried to escape ridicule by carrying their dogma back to its primitive simplicity—that is to say, the transmigration of the souls of men into men, and of beasts into beasts. But the Hindoos have religiously preserved their metempsychosis complete.

This belief, at any rate, has the advantage of explaining the dispensation of rewards and chastisements. We have already described this system, which possesses a certain amount of logic: the poor, the blind, the Pariah are only undergoing the chastisement for sins committed in another life, and they cannot accuse the creator, who is punishing them justly.

While they believe in transmigration, the Hindoos also acknowledge another life, recognising both a Paradise and a Hell. Their hell is a place of punishment reserved for those souls who have been utterly abandoned to sin during life. This place is called *Naraka*, or *Patala*, and is divided into seven apartments, in which are applied torments varying in rigour according to the gravity of the crimes.

Yama, judge of the dead, is the king of this hell, and the executioners of his decrees inflict upon the inhabitants of Naraka the tortures he has awarded for their misdeeds. His emissaries are scattered over the whole world, watching for the moment of man's death to seize upon his soul and carry it before the tribunal. Yama consults his registers, which are kept by numberless secretaries in his employ, and which contain an exact account of all the good and evil which is committed upon earth. He forms his judgment upon these reports, and pronounces sentence upon the souls as they appear before him.

But there are other agents at work upon earth, waiting to seize the souls of the dead; invisible beings, who are commissioned by Vishnu and Siva to attend upon their special adherents. When they die, the messengers of each god strive to conduct their souls to him whom they have worshipped during life. Many lively disputes are occasioned by these struggles between the emissaries of the different gods, but devotion to Vishnu or Siva, however feeble it may have been, is so meritorious that their emissaries are usually triumphant, and those of Yama are obliged to surrender the prize.

If we may believe the accounts in the sacred books, the torments in Naraka are insupportable. In that dismal abode reigns eternal night; no sounds are heard but shrieks and fearful groans; whilst the sharpest pains that can be inflicted by iron and fire are there endured without interruption. Certain punishments are allotted for every species of crime, for every sense, and for every member of the body; fire, iron, serpents, birds of prey, wild beasts, poison, fetid stenches, are all employed for the torture of the damned. Some have a cord passed through their nostrils, and are dragged by it along the edge of a highly-sharpened axe; others are condemned to pass through the eye of a needle: here are some between two flat rocks, which are continually uniting and crushing without destroying them; there starving vultures unceasingly rive at the bleeding sockets from whence the eyes have already been torn. The condemned wretches cannot succumb to these insupportable torments, and they add to the horrors of the place by giving utterance to the most frightful shrieks and yells of pain.

None of these horrors are eternal, but their exact duration is not determined. A general revolution and total convulsion of nature takes place at the termination of each age, or *yuga*. When the assigned period has arrived, all the souls will be reunited to the divine essence from which they sprang, and the world will end, the pangs of the damned ending with it.

After the souls in Naraka have there expiated their crimes, they are sent back to earth to undergo new trans-

migrations. They re-enter the world in the form of some animal, and in going from one state to another they are permitted to nourish the hope that, by acquiring the necessary amount of virtue, they may, at the end of thousands of years, attain to a final reunion with the Great Spirit, or Divine Essence of the world.

Adjacent to the purgatory above described stands paradise. The Hindoos acknowledge several abodes of felicity, into which are received the souls of those who have expiated their crimes by repeated transmigrations, and by the torments they have suffered from Yama.

These blessed places are four in number—the *Swarga*, presided over by the god Indra, and filled with those souls who have been negatively virtuous; the *Vaikuntha*, or Paradise of Vishnu; the *Kailasa*, that of Siva; and the *Satyaloka*, or the *World of Truth*, where Brahma himself presides exclusively over the souls of Brahmins.

The pleasures of each of these habitations are purely material, and such as gratify the senses. The souls are satiated with this enjoyment for a longer or shorter period according to their merits, and are then obliged to return to earth, and recommence their transmigrations until they are thoroughly purified.

A soul thus refined and purified is reunited for ever to Para—Brahma, the divinity, the universal essence—where it finds supreme felicity and deliverance, to which they give the appellation of *Moksham*.

The imagination of men of any nation is less fertile in inventing celestial rewards than punishments; on the

ground that if the fear of the horrors of hell will not keep a man in the straight road, the joys of paradise will never persuade him to return to it.

Each of the sects seeks to exalt the god whom he adores, and to cast reproach on the deity of his opponents. The devotees of Vishnu and of Siva emulate each other in the vileness of their abuse, and very often have recourse to blows. The numerous bands of religious vagabonds of the two sects delight in provoking these altercations. They collect together for the purpose of maintaining against all the world the pre-excellence of their creed, utter the most atrocious abuse garnished with blasphemies and imprecations, and finally come to blows. But there is very rarely any blood shed; and they usually separate after a single round, to recommence on the next occasion.

Nevertheless, fanaticism has never plunged them into those dreadful religious wars which have stained Europe with blood for so many centuries. Indeed the Rajahs or princes have seldom succeeded in exciting religious feeling for the sake of their political interests.

The greater number of Hindoos, and specially the Brahmins, take no part in these religious quarrels. Their system is to accord equal honour to each of the divinities of their country; and although they generally seem to prefer Vishnu, yet they never allow a day to pass without offering a sacrifice to the symbol of Siva.



CHAPTER VII.

The Gurus—Their Authority—Pomp of the higher order—Fakirs—Prayers, or *Mantras*—Doctors and Sorcerers—The Evil Eye.

HAVING now pointed out the several religious divisions, we must next speak of the priests, or Gurus. Our reason for insisting so particularly on the religious history of India is, that its laws and customs have been more carefully preserved than in any other country on earth, so that, during a period of twenty-five centuries, scarcely a single change in the castes has occurred. It has been said that some of the castes have disappeared, but that is an error propagated by the Brahmins at the same time that they endeavour to prevent the study of the Vedas, to the end that they may retain the monopoly of divine science and human power.

In truth, the Brahmins themselves have not absolutely preserved the customs of their forefathers. They practise all professions and drive all trades; they are writers or public functionaries, ministers of state or village accountants, judges and priests. But, notwithstanding that they have quitted the heights of contemplation and descended into

the valleys of ignoble employment, they have contrived to preserve the reverence of the people, and, by this very fact, a great moral ascendancy.

But although the inferior castes which existed in the time of Menu have been replaced by numerous mixed classes of questionable descent, their precepts and creeds have scarcely varied.

In portraying their religious guides, the Hindoos were wont to clothe them with heavenly attributes far exceeding the power of frail humanity; and actual everyday life showing the fallacy of this, the priesthood became accredited with mere speculative virtues. Thus in one of the Brahminical volumes we find the following portrait of a perfect priest:—

“A true Guru is a man to whom the practice of all the virtues is familiar; who with the sword of wisdom lops off all the branches, severs all the roots of sin, and dissipates by the light of reason the thick shadows in which humanity envelopes itself; who, although seated on the mountain of sin, opposes to its attacks a heart as hard as a diamond. He conducts himself with dignity and independence; his heart yearns towards his disciples as towards his children; he makes no difference betwixt friends and enemies, and exercises over each the same benevolence; he regards gold and precious stones with as much indifference as fragments of iron or glass; and he expends all his energy in dispelling the gloom of ignorance in which mankind is plunged. He is a man who thrusts far from him every criminal impulse, and practises only

acts of virtue ; who, knowing every path which leads to vice, knows also the way to avoid it, and observes with scrupulous exactness the laws of decorum which must be kept in honour of Siva. Finally, he must have learnt all that it is possible for man to know."

Such is the Indian priest, who represents all the nobler aspirations of the Hindoos.

But, if we descend from these ideal heights to the dead level of reality, we see that these men possess a power at once spiritual and temporal. They administer the office of police, and take care that all general and particular customs are accurately observed ; they punish those who infringe them, exclude from the caste those who incur this shameful penance, and alone have power to pronounce their readmittance.

Besides this authority, which none would question, they exercise no less a power as religious guides. Men prostrate themselves before them, and their benediction will gain remission of sins ; even the sight of them is all-sufficient. Besides their blessing, the Gurus frequently bestow presents upon their disciples—such as a bit of cow-dung reduced to ashes, with which they smear their foreheads ; the fruits or flowers offered to the idols, scraps of their food, or the water with which they have rinsed their mouths, or washed their faces or feet. This water is carefully preserved and drunk by those who receive it. Every gift offered by their sacred hands can purify souls and bodies from pollution.

But if their blessing and gifts excite the admiration,

gratitude, and respect of the people, their curse, which is equally powerful, fills with terror and awe. The immediate followers or attendants of the Guru, interested in keeping up a wholesome fear of their master, do not fail to relate marvellous stories concerning him, of which they pretend to have been eye-witnesses; generally laying the scene in some distant country to avoid detection. They speak of one person who died on the spot where he was cursed by a Guru; of another who was attacked by a shivering fit, which lasted until the anathema was removed. The Hindoo is possessed so strongly by fear of the Guru, that, rather than incur his anger, he will sell his wife and children to procure the tithe or presents exacted by the priest.

Each caste and sect has its particular Guru, but they are not clothed with an equal authority; there exists amongst them a kind of hierarchy. Besides the numerous inferior clergy, there are a limited number of pontiffs, to whom the Gurus are subordinate, and from whom they receive their authority. The place of residence of their high-priests is called *Singhāsan*, which signifies a *throne*; the different castes and each sect have their own particular pontiffs, who have no authority beyond it.

Every king, prince, or great personage has a Guru especially attached to his household, to whom he offers the greatest respect. The Guru accompanies him on his journeys, unless they are warlike, or otherwise perilous, when the holy man prudently stays behind—first bestowing many precious gifts and amulets on the travellers, to

preserve them from all dangers during the absence of their spiritual guide. The princes surround their Gurus with the greatest magnificence, and make them large grants of land, yielding considerable revenues.

The superior priests never show themselves in public without the utmost degree of pomp. Generally a guard of cavalry precedes them, as, mounted on a richly-caparisoned elephant, or seated in a splendid palanquin, they move on, surrounded by armed soldiers, to the sound of drums and various instruments. Banners of all colours are carried before them, and the procession is headed by heralds, who chant the praises of the grand Guru, and warn all passers-by to do him homage. All along the route triumphal arches are erected, and groups of girls accompany the *cortege*, enlivening the way by dances and songs. This exhibition attracts crowds of people, who first prostrate themselves before the Guru, and then join his escort, adding their voices to the general din.

The inferior orders of priests display far less pomp ; they either ride on a sorry horse or go on foot ; but, whatever their rank, they are treated with the respect due to the gods, for the Hindoo believes that a Guru may issue his commands even to the celestial powers.

There are also other orders of inferior priests, called *Fakirs*, of whom we read that they live for the most part in convents, take vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and consider themselves as part of the Deity. Some of these fanatics wear no clothing, and may be seen sitting naked day and night, on a bed of ashes, under the shade

of the great trees surrounding the temples of the idols. Many of them wear their hair very long, and entangled like a spaniel's, and hold one, or even both arms, continually above the head, never changing their position, even to feed themselves. They are waited upon and fed by the young novices, who consider them holy men, and take no exception



INDIAN FAKIRS.

tion to their horrible filthiness. Sometimes they make long pilgrimages, not only perfectly nude, but loaded with heavy iron weights; and not infrequently, in fulfilment of a vow, they stand upright for eight consecutive days, obtaining rest only by leaning upon a cord stretched



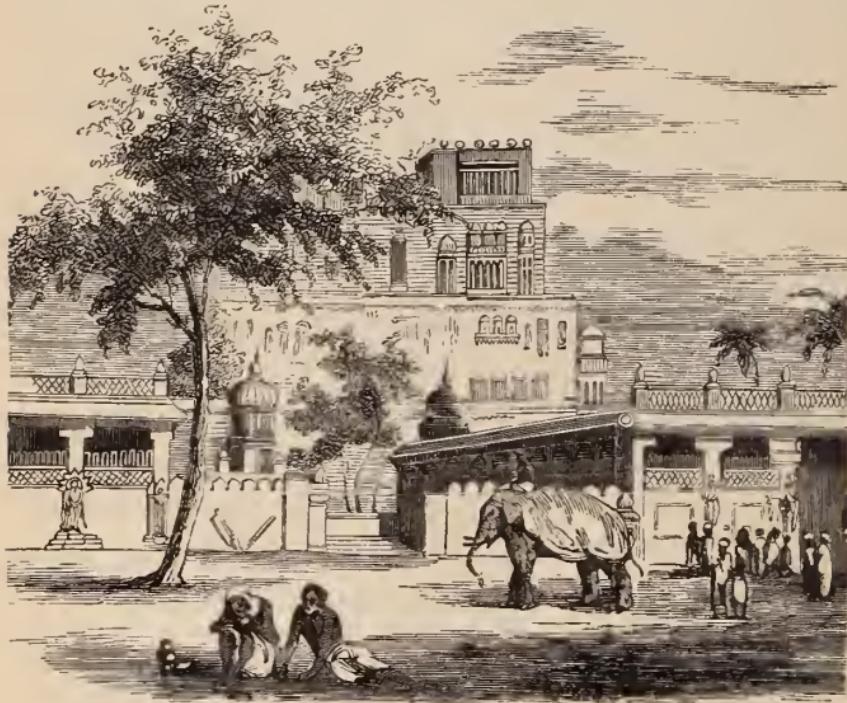
INDIAN FAKIR.

in front of their bodies, and quite unmindful of the frightful swelling of their legs. They will even remain a whole day standing head downwards, with their feet in the air—a posture with difficulty imitated by our own clowns. We can scarcely believe that they are incited to these acts by true piety; but they say they torture themselves thus in the hope of earning an entrance into a happier life. Some of them sell drugs, and are celebrated for preparing mercury in a peculiar manner. They also perform wonders, such as causing the branch of a tree to become suddenly covered with fruit, or hatching an egg by the warmth of their own bodies. We shall have occasion to mention these fanatics later on, and will now return to the Gurus.

These people make grand visitations, from time to time, for the purpose of collecting money. They impose numberless fines for sins against the laws of the sect, piously pocketing the money; and when payment is not instantly made, they so work upon the credulity and terror of their victim, by threats and maledictions, that he is soon forced to obey. Fortunately the priests do not visit their flocks very frequently—not oftener, perhaps, than once in five, or even ten years; and in the interim they derive their revenues from the fees attached to births, marriages, and deaths.

As a great many Sudras seek to attain to the dignity of Gurus, the Brahmins pretend that they alone have a right to this rank, and that all others are intruders; nevertheless many of the former are elevated to the priestly office, and enjoy its honours and emoluments.

There are usually convents erected near the pagodas, in which the priests dwell, but the high-priest himself lives in the town, and receives the visits of the faithful, who come to him with presents, and receive in return his benediction. They prostrate themselves on the ground before him, making the *sashtangam* before described, while he says—"I am your Guru, and you must adore me." They



HINDOO PAGODA.

then rise and proceed to perform a solemn ceremony. If they are of the sect of Siva, they merely wash the priest's feet, and use the water afterwards to wash their own faces, reserving some to drink; but the followers of Vishnu have a still more disgusting custom, for they swallow with avidity

any morsel which has been chewed by the priest, and the water with which he has rinsed his mouth.

The dignity of married priests descends from father to son, and if a Guru has no children, he usually associates with him a coadjutor, who succeeds to his office at his death. This is more particularly the case with the high pontiffs.

There are also priestesses, called the spouses of the gods, of a different class to the dancers of the temples, but equal to them in depravity. Those consecrated to Vishnu are branded on the breast with the image of the eagle of Malabar. The priestesses of Siva wear, instead, the image dear to their god.

We have already mentioned the Hindoo belief, that the prayers of the priests can influence the power of the gods. These prayers, or *mantras*, are supposed to have a variety of effects. They can inspire love or hatred, cause or cure maladies, or send death to a whole army; and the grand principle of this teaching is—"That the universe is in the power of the gods; the gods are in the power of the prayers; the prayers are in the power of the Brahmins." Therefore, the Brahmins are the supreme, and in many books are termed *the terrestrial gods*.

There is an Indian poem giving an example of this power.

Dasara, king of Mathura, espoused *Kalavati*, daughter of the king of Benares. On the day of their marriage, she warned him not to take upon himself the rights of a husband, because, having learnt the mantram of five letters, she was pervaded by a purifying fire, which would prevent

any man from approaching her unless he had been purified himself by the same means; she could not herself teach him this mantram, because she was his wife, and doing so would constitute her his Guru, and therefore his superior. So the following day the couple went to the recluse *Garga*, who ordered them to fast one day, and to bathe in the Ganges. Thus prepared they returned to *Garga*, who ordered the husband to sit down facing the east; and, placing himself beside him, he whispered in his ear the words *Nama-Sivaya*, or “health to Siva.” On the king repeating these five syllables, a multitude of crows issued from his body and flew away. These were the sins of his former life; and, thus purified, the king and his wife returned home, and lived together happily for many years.

The virtue of such prayers and formulæ has been somewhat contested in recent times, but the Brahmins say it is because faith is becoming dim. The most famed of the mantras is a prayer in honour of the sun, which none but a Brahmin has the right of repeating, and that only in a solemn whisper. There is also another, consisting simply of the wonderful monosyllable *om*, or *srim*, which seems to bear a signification resembling the *Jehovah* of the Hebrews.

All doctors, as well as priests, must make use of sacred formulæ, without which no cures can be effected; and the Hindoos do not put the slightest faith in European doctors, because their prescriptions are unaccompanied by the recitation of mantras, which they believe to possess more real efficacy than any other remedies.

The ceremonies of the Brahmins are very curious; in particular, one performed exclusively by women, the object of which is to neutralise the glance of those endowed with an evil eye. Whenever a dignitary appears in public, or receives strangers, he first summons the dancers of the temple, who place in a metal plate a lamp made of a paste of



DANCING-GIRL.

rice-flour and covered with oil. They light this, and raise it to the height of the great man's head, and this simple performance preserves him from any evil glances to which he may be exposed in the crowd. Kings and princes keep girls for this purpose continually in their service. The Hindoos believe that the fruits of the earth, as well as animals, may be blighted by the evil eye ; and to avert the possibility of this, they often place a brilliant white vase in the middle of the fields or gardens, that it may attract the eye of the ill-disposed passers-by, and prevent their glance from resting upon the crops. They also place faith in a certain sacred herb, which possesses the power of scaring and putting to flight those demons and evil spirits whose sole mission is to injure men and disturb the sacred ceremonies of the Brahmins.

Quack sorcerers are very numerous ; they perform great miracles, and undertake to discover stolen goods or hidden treasures, to make revelations concerning the future, and, in fact, to possess every kind of knowledge. But woe to the unfortunate magician who has drawn upon himself the anger of the people by injuring any of their number through his enchantments ! They punish him on the spot by drawing out the two front teeth in the upper jaw, which prevents him from properly reciting his diabolical mantras ; for these prayers, if pronounced imperfectly, will cause all the evil intended for others to fall upon the invoker's own shoulders.



CHAPTER VIII.

The Brahmins—Their Youth and Education—Their right of asking Alms—
Paternity—Petty Ceremonials—Their Prayers.

HERE are four important epochs in a Brahmin's life. The first is his investiture as a youth with the triple cord; the second, his marriage and paternity; the third, his retreat into the forests with his wife; and the last, absolute solitude. Every Brahmin wears a shoulder-belt, from the left shoulder to the right hip, composed of three strands, each formed of nine threads. The cotton of which this is made must be plucked, carded, and spun by Brahmins, that it may not be defiled by contact with impure hands. When a Brahmin marries, his cord is made of nine threads instead of three. The priests, and others who have the right of wearing this cordon, attach a greater value to it than any European does to his decorations. The ceremony of investiture lasts three days, but is too complicated to describe here. The unfortunate candidate is subjected to a protracted series of purifications, from the time that the barber shaves his head and cuts the nails of his hands and feet, to the sound of music, until the women clothe him in

white garments, after breaking all the vessels used during the ceremony.

When the father teaches his son the mantras, he adds, "Remember, my son, that there is but one God, Sovereign Lord, and moving principle of all things, and that every Brahmin must worship him in secret; but know that this mystery may never be revealed to the common herd, and if thou dost forget this, thou wilt be visited by great evils." These words sound strange from the mouth of a Brahmin, and we rather doubt their authenticity.

The education of the young Brahmans is very different from that of the children of other castes. From the time of their investiture with the triple cord to the period of their marriage, they must devote themselves to study, must learn to read and write, to commit the Vedas and the mantras to memory, and study arithmetic and the sciences. They are not allowed, during this immature period, to use the betel-nut, to ornament their turbans or hair with flowers, their foreheads with sandalwood paste, or to look in a glass. They are bound to offer sacrifice morning and evening; to conform to the manners and customs of their caste; to obey their parents and masters; and to be modest, affable, and kindly to all. Their masters take special pains to teach them the arts of dissimulation and duplicity, qualities possessed in great perfection by the Brahmans. The rules of civility and kindness, the art of elegant conversation and good manners, the air of haughtiness or humility to be assumed in the various circumstances of life, are essential points in the young men's education.

But however stringent may be the rules against indulgence, they are very often eluded, and the young Brahmin may be frequently seen ornamented with the sandalwood paste, and his mouth stuffed with betel.

The leaf of the betel pepper (*piper betle*) and the nut of the areca palm (*areca catechu*) together constitute what is improperly termed the betel-nut. As an article of commerce it is sold separately under the name of betel-nut, because, as a masticating article, it is always used with the leaf of the betel pepper. The habit of chewing this compound has extended from the Malay Archipelago, where it is chiefly found, to the Continent of Asia, and its use is now universal, from the Red Sea to Japan. Its preparation for use is very simple: the nut is sliced and wrapped in the leaf, with a little quicklime to give it a flavour. All classes, male and female, are in the habit of chewing it, and think it improves the digestion. It gives to the tongue and lips a scarlet hue, and in time turns the teeth perfectly black. The Malays have a hideous appearance from its use, but the Chinese are very careful to remove the stain from the teeth. Persons of rank often carry it, prepared for use, in splendid cases worn at the girdle, and offer it to each other as the people of Europe or America offer snuff.

If, for want of means or otherwise, a Brahmin finds himself unable to marry before the age of eighteen or twenty, he still enters into the second period of his life, and, as soon as he has received the cordon, assumes the six privileges attached to his rank, namely—to read the Vedas, and to have them read; to offer the chief sacrifice, and to command

its celebration; to give alms and presents, and to receive the same. The unlucky Sudras possess but one of these rights, that of giving presents to the Brahmins, who are willing to honour them by accepting offerings from their impure hands.

The Brahmins have the sole right of reading the Vedas, or sacred books—at least it is so much to their own interest to prevent the other castes from learning their contents, that they have succeeded in spreading the belief that, if a rash member of another tribe were even to read the titles, his head would instantly split in two. But few Brahmins can read in the original these famous books, which they assert to have emanated from the great Brahma himself; although, in reality, they contain very little except absurd fables, and their sole interest, from a religious point of view, is their great antiquity. Indeed the fourth book, called *Altravana-veda*, has a most dangerous tendency, for it relates to the practice of magic, and enjoins human sacrifices.

The Brahmins have a decided preference for certain kinds of presents, such as gold, lands, clothes, corn, and cattle; and they certainly show discernment in choosing the most valuable gifts—cows holding a very high place in their estimation, as milk is their principal food. The generosity of their princes has made them the owners of large tracts of land, exempt from taxes, and transmissible from father to son. These are cultivated by the Sudras, who take half the profits.

Cattle are regarded as sacred throughout Hindostan, and many of them are permitted to roam at will through the

streets, inspecting the shops, and appropriating whatever dainty their fancy may lead them to select. The bull is sacred to Siva, and is typical of justice; every joint in its body is held to possess a virtue, and injustice (*ad herma*) commences where the tail of the animal ends. The Indian cattle may be readily distinguished from the European by the curious hump on the shoulders. They are quiet as a rule, but so pampered that they resent any attempt to thwart their inclination.



INDIAN CATTLE.

Of course the Brahmins, besides receiving the revenues of these lands, appropriate all offerings brought to the idols. We have already stated that to ask and receive alms is no degradation to the priests, but is exercised as a right; therefore they do not solicit charity with a suppliant air and humble voice, but haughtily claim as a tribute or tax the offerings of the faithful. Still they are not importunate or insolent, like the Fakirs and Vishnuvite mendicants; nor do they make a trade of begging from door to door, as is the custom with the latter. They make known their

necessities, and if they are supplied they return no thanks, but if they are refused they depart without complaint or murmur. But he who makes promises to a Brahmin, and does not fulfil them, draws upon himself the divine vengeance; and of this the following anecdote is a proof:—

“Oh!” cried a monkey, who saw a fox devouring tainted carrion; “you must have committed most heinous crimes in former ages, to be condemned to feed upon such abominations.” “Alas!” replied the fox, shuddering; “I am undergoing only what I deserve. I was once a man, and I promised to bestow a present upon a Brahmin, and failed to fulfil my promise; and it is for this reason that I am condemned to live again under this form, and to lead a life which is so repugnant to me.”

The Brahmins assert that he who breaks his word to them, or causes them any injury, will be born after his death under the form of a devil, who can live neither on earth nor in air, but must remain always in a thick forest, howling, and cursing his evil fate.

We see that the Brahmins spare no means of making themselves respected. They are exempt from the onerous and oppressive requisitions which weigh so heavily on the other inhabitants, who are obliged to keep up the roads and repair the temples, to furnish provisions for troops during their march, and for the magistrates and other public officials, and receive neither payment for their services nor compensation for their losses. And this holds good with artisans and labourers of every kind.

We have said that these holy men could not undergo

the penalty of death, and it is very rarely that they are subjected to any punishment at all. But in the districts under European or Mahomedan rule their sacred character is less respected, and they are liable, like other men, to chastisements proportionate to their faults. They sometimes expire under the blows of an oppressor, rather than redeem themselves by a money payment; for, whether it is from avarice, or from the conviction that, should they once yield, their tyrants would not refrain until they had despoiled them of all their possessions, the Brahmins prefer to endure the greatest tortures, and even death itself, rather than submit to the smallest exactions. They will, however, employ every degree of falsehood, oaths, and protestations to release themselves from their difficulties, and consider that perjury, employed on their own behalf, is a virtuous and meritorious act.

When a Brahmin marries, and becomes father of a child, he is raised one degree in the religious hierarchy, and finds himself subject to certain new obligations. He is bound to rise an hour and a-half before the sun, to devote his first thoughts to Vishnu, and then to meditate for some time on the duties of his profession; after that he must go through certain minute ceremonials of washing and purification, each detail of which is most carefully taught. These purifications, rendered obligatory by superstition, had their origin in certain wise principles of hygiene very necessary in those hot climates, and are only grotesque from the over-strict ceremonial which is enjoined in their performance.

One peculiarity is the employment of the left hand only

in washing the lower part of the body, and in any dirty operation, such as blowing the nose, cleaning the ears, &c. To use the right hand for these purposes would be an unpardonable error, and the custom is so familiar that the Hindoos hardly ever make a mistake. The sight of a foreigner, who uses his handkerchief and replaces it in his pocket, is most revolting to them; and they feel the same disgust at our manner of cleaning our teeth, by using a brush made of the bristles of an animal, and by continuing the use of it after it has been once polluted by the saliva. They rub their teeth with a small piece of newly-cut green wood, saying at the time the following prayer:—"God of the forests, I have cut from your branches a bit of wood to clean my teeth with. Grant to me, by this act which I am about to do, a long life, strength, honour, and intelligence; and bestow upon me many cows, much riches, prudence, judgment, memory, and power." Cleaning the teeth is forbidden during certain phases of the moon, and on such unhappy anniversaries as the death of a father or a mother.

A Brahmin is bound to perform ablutions thrice a-day—at morning, noon, and night—each time observing the most complicated laws. He must walk round and round a sacred tree; must offer prayers to the sun; chase away the giants and demons by snapping his fingers; unite, by repeating sacred formulæ, the vital soul and the supreme soul, which reside in different parts of the body; press his nostrils together between his fingers and thumb, whilst he holds his breath and pronounces the word *ron* six times;

and, in short, must perform numberless absurd gestures too tedious to describe. A Brahmin sits down to eat, always sharing his food, if he has the means, with his poorer brethren. He takes his repast in silence, and, before beginning it, lays aside a small portion of the rice and other viands for his deceased ancestors.

Many of the prescriptions concerning food have fallen into disuse, but they are most curious. At the first mouthful of rice a Brahmin should cry—"I adore the wind who resides in my breast ;" at the second, "I adore the wind who resides in my face ;" at the third, "that in my throat ;" at the fourth, "that which lives in my whole body ;" and so on. Their food is usually prepared by women, but all Brahmins boast of being good cooks.

In their intercourse with the world they may never covet either the goods or the wives of other men : a doctrine which proves that the old lawgivers were mindful of the principles of natural morality. A Brahmin must make a tour of the temples once, or oftener, according to the requirements of the god to whom he is devoted. After his devotions are over, he must turn towards the idol, and, holding the left ear with the right hand, and the right ear with the left hand, must squat down three times on his heels, and then give himself sundry blows upon the temples. He may then retire to rest, first choosing a place well hidden from observation, and purifying it by rubbing it with cow-dung.

It would be useless to reproduce here the long prayers which the Brahmins address each day to their deities—

to water, to fire, to butter—tying a knot, after each is done, in the lock of hair they wear at the top of the head. The god Brahma is invoked in terms such as these—“Come, Brahma, light upon my body, and stay, stay, stay a long while.” They represent this god as painted red, having four faces and two arms, girded with a cord; in one hand he holds a pitcher, and stands upon an egg, surrounded by a crowd of smaller divinities.

Vishnu is invoked in almost the same words—“Come, Vishnu, rest upon my breast, and remain, remain, remain there.” This god is coloured brown; it has four arms; one hand holds a shell, the second and third a weapon, and the fourth a lily; and he stands upon a bird of prey. Siva is white, and has in one hand a trident, in the other a drum. He has five faces, and three eyes in each, with a half-moon on his forehead; and he rides upon a bull.

There is one very famous prayer addressed to the goddess Gayatri, which procures for men forgiveness of their sins, riches, good health, and happiness, and secures their felicity after death. The modern Brahmins endeavour to explain away the absurdity of all their practices, by saying that they are for the most part allegories, of which the hidden meaning is most reasonable. Fasting is continually enjoined, and the neglect of it severely punished. This is a most necessary observance, for the Brahmins are such intemperate gluttons, that restriction at certain times is requisite for the preservation of health. They excuse their gormandising habits by pretending that inordinate eating is pleasing to their gods.



CHAPTER IX.

The Climate a cause of Indolence and Inactivity—Firmness and Resolution of the Hindoos—Rapid Development of Faculties—Personal Appearance—Dress—Custom of painting the Face.

IT is most difficult to give an exact account of the general character of the Hindoos, for their religion and customs have raised an impenetrable barrier between themselves and Europeans. We may, however, safely attribute some of their numerous defects of character to their physical constitution and the great heat of the climate.

Where intense heat is uninterrupted, and causes such sterility of soil as can be overcome only by hard labour, the inhabitants do not become enervated. But in India a fertile soil, and heat tempered by the rains, tempt even foreigners to indolence and inactivity. These are, in fact, the characteristic traits of the Hindoo nation; and if we add to them extreme timidity, an unconquerable objection to anything like trouble or annoyance, and an utter want of animal courage, we shall have touched the key-note to all their vices. From their very cradles they are instructed

in the art of deception. Crafty, insinuating, patient, fertile in intrigue, they apply their whole powers to deceiving those with whom they are brought into contact, and the only exception is amongst the bankers and merchants, who fulfil their engagements with scrupulous exactness, probably because justice is so badly administered in the country that their affairs could be carried on in no other way. But the Hindoos certainly possess a wonderful art of penetrating secrets, and reading the characters of those whom they intend to deceive; and they generally attain their aims without the employment of any great violence or crime.

The cause of this state of corruption may be traced to the example set by those in high places. To take bribes, to act contrary to the dictates of law and conscience, is no sin in the eyes of the officials; and to pillage the public treasury is perfectly permissible, until discovered. It is therefore hopeless to persuade the people that honesty is commendable, when roguery is in the very atmosphere, and they see their chiefs living by open fraud.

A Hindoo official never, under any circumstances, gives other than an evasive answer, and he will not hesitate to prolong a case if he thinks his own interests may be thereby favoured. Their love of litigation is marvellous. Interminable disputes occur between adverse suitors, in which both become so excited, that they seem on the point of determining the cause by blows; but they rarely fight with anything but the tongue, and hardly ever abandon the case until the last anna is spent. Though greatly

attached to the traditions of their caste, the general patriotism of the Hindoo is very lukewarm, and does not, as a rule, extend beyond his own village.

We must not imagine, however, that they are absolutely destitute of virtue ; they have a peculiar morality of their own, and neither persuasion nor force could make them break those laws which they have been taught to respect. A Brahmin, for instance, would rather starve to death than touch forbidden food ; a village chief would endure the most cruel torture sooner than pay an unjust imposition ; and a servant, who would have no scruple in robbing his master in every imaginable way, would guard with the strictest fidelity a sum of money deposited in his hands. Though utterly wanting in physical courage, these people exhibit much firmness and resolution at the approach of death. His fate once decided, the Hindoo assumes a *sang-froid* which excites the admiration of Europeans, and appears to feel no dismay at his coming fate. Are we to seek the explanation of this fortitude in the theory of metempsychosis ?

Raymond says that the highest type of the Hindoo character is to be found amongst the Rajahpootras, and the other military classes of Lower India, the country from which the English army draws its recruits. These retain much of the originality of the national character, dropping at the same time some of its bad qualities, and present a fine mixture of pride, enthusiastic courage, and generous devotion, allied to a noble manner, refined sentiments, and an almost infantile simplicity.

The agricultural population throughout India may be described as inoffensive and amiable. They are warmly attached to their families, charitable to their neighbours, and honest and sincere towards all who do not belong to the Government service.

The townspeople have a more complex character ; but they are generally quiet and orderly, and seldom break the public peace. Indeed, if we except the Government functionaries, the population of the Indian cities may be favourably compared to those of European towns ; the former holding a certain superiority over the middle classes of the West, derived from the laws of their religion, and their peculiar social organisation. Neither do we find, amongst the working classes, the depravity so common in our great towns ; the crowd of people who, with us, live by fraudulent practices, and the adventurers of all kinds, from the highest to the lowest rung of the social ladder, are almost unknown in India. In a broad sense, the Hindoos, as a nation, lack energy, whilst their absurd superstitions, extravagant mythology, the subtleties of their philosophy, the enervating tendency of their poetry, the effeminacy of their manners, the timidity of their character, their fear of change, and the pleasure they take in trivial amusements, prove their levity, and the absence of all manly virtues that prevails amongst them. Yet these defects are not common to every class or to every age, for the lower classes are laborious and persevering, and those occupying higher stations can at times endure intense fatigues and cruel deprivations. Reverses

soon dishearten them; they fight with difficulty against a determined enemy; and yet their history is by no means barren in records of military exploits. If honour or religion demand their death, they know how to die; and it by no means rare to hear of suicide in the case of disgrace.

But, though their usual mode of life is inoffensive, there exist among them bands of the most formidable thieves and assassins, such as the Thugs and Dacoits, whose daring and ferocity are boundless. These miscreants assemble during the night, burst suddenly on a village, slay all who resist, lay violent hands on those they can seize, and put to the torture any whom they suspect of possessing hidden treasure. Next day they disperse themselves amongst the population, and the fear they inspire is so great that, even when known, they are rarely denounced. A peculiar feature in these bands is, that they include quite as many Mussulmans as Hindoos. But we must not fail to state that, notwithstanding the monstrous atrocities committed by these gangs, there are fewer crimes in India than in many parts of Europe. Many go unpunished, it is true; but, in a calculation of the number of condemnations in England and in Bengal, the difference would be in favour of Bengal. Jealousy causes far more crimes in India than love of money. There are few petty thieves, and every one sleeps with his doors open.

We cannot deny that ingratitude is frequent, yet we hear of many natives who, having been kindly treated

by their masters when in prosperity, remained faithful to them in adversity. Indeed the devotion of the Hindoos to their chiefs is proverbial.

The poor are careless, the rich prodigal and fond of show. Some of the latter, however, condescend to add to their means by commerce, or by lending money at enormous interest.



INDIAN SCHOOL.

Hindoo children are more intelligent than English; up to the age of fourteen or fifteen they develop their faculties with rapidity, but the intellect then seems to have attained

its maximum, and they gain nothing after that age. In stature the natives are shorter and slighter than Europeans, not so strongly built, but more supple, agile, and graceful. The girls are remarkably pretty, simple, and reserved.



YOUNG LADY OF BURMAH.

These details prove that the Hindoos are both mentally and physically inferior to Europeans; but, at the same time, it must be remembered that they are an unprogressive nation, averse to any innovations, and cherishing old customs with singular tenacity; whilst the fact that they had attained a high state of civilisation whilst Europe was sunk in barbarism is indisputable.

The complexion of the Hindoos is naturally tawny, darker than that of the inhabitants of Southern Europe, and lighter than the negroes; but the hue varies considerably, according to their different modes of life. The Pariahs are often as dark as Kaffirs, whilst the skin of the Brahmin is like yellow leather, or coffee, though both inhabit the same province; and the greatest beauties amongst the women are somewhat the colour of gingerbread. Their hair is invariably black, long and straight, their foreheads low, and their eyes black or grey: the blue eyes of Europeans seem to them a disfigurement. The palms of the hands and soles of the feet are, as with all men of colour, much lighter than the rest of the body. Their constitution is always weak; they have neither our strength, vigour, nor activity; and a European workman can always get through twice as much labour as a native. This weakness is due, partly to the climate, partly to the quality of the food to which, by their religion, they are restricted; and from want of animal food their minds become as enfeebled as their bodies. No other nation produces so large a proportion of idiots. There are plenty of men possessing good strong sense and great intelligence; but we never hear of an



YOUNG WOMAN OF MADRAS.

instance of real genius, and their average intellect is very mediocre. They rarely exhibit tenacity of purpose, and their reckless improvidence is proverbial, constantly plunging them from opulence into utter destitution, which they bear with apathetic resignation.

The language of the Brahmins is pure, concise, and elegant, being much tinctured with the Sanscrit, and they do not hesitate to make use of the most fulsome compliments to gain their ends. At the same time, they are equally rich in abusive epithets, and pour them forth, without restriction, when they are excited to anger.

After speaking of the graceful flights and extravagant compliments of the Brahmins, the Abbé Dubois says— “But to reverse the picture, and turn to their horrid and execrable foulness of language and imprecations; they must be admitted to have a more unbounded supply of these flowers of speech than of the courteous sort. For, although the Brahmins pride themselves on their politeness and good education, they forget them both when their passion is roused. On these occasions, such a torrent of the most indecent and obscene expressions issues from their impure mouths, that one would be tempted to suppose they had made a particular study of the language of invective and insult.”

In ancient times the Hindoos went bareheaded and naked to the waist, and the inhabitants of the coast of Malabar and some of the savage tribes still preserve this custom. But the usual dress consists of a single piece of uncut cloth, about three yards long and one in

width, which is wrapped round the loins, passed between the legs, and fastened behind, whilst the other end is draped negligently round the limbs, and ornamented with a fringe of red silk. Those who are employed by Europeans or Mahomedans wear a long robe of muslin or fine linen; the Brahmins fastening it at the left side, and the Mahomedans at the right, and securing it by a gaudy sash, folded several times round the waist. The turban, an ornament borrowed from the Moors, is composed of about twenty yards of fine linen, which is twisted artistically round the head, the form varying according to the country or caste of the wearer. The costume of the Brahmins is the same for rich and poor, and only varies in the quality of the stuff. Although cotton is largely grown in India, and, in fact, forms the staple article of export to Great Britain, by far the greater proportion of the printed and stamped calico fabrics used by the natives as wearing apparel come from our Manchester looms. Some manufactories are now established in Hindostan, and bid fair to succeed. The enormous loss of time, and the extra expense incurred by shipping the raw material to England for the purpose of converting it into cloth, necessarily enhance its price, and the Indian cotton question is at this moment occupying the attention of Government.

All Hindoos wear ornaments in the ears. Even the penitents, who are supposed to have subdued the three great lusts of women, honours, and riches, do not relinquish their earrings, although they wear them of brass instead of gold. These pendants are generally oval, and

of immoderate size, whilst on grand occasions as many as four or five pairs are worn at once. In some districts a gold ring is carried in the nostril, but this is an exception ; while it is considered a disgrace to wear no earrings, even by the very poorest.



The wealthier Hindoos delight in exhibiting themselves adorned with a profusion of jewellery. Their trinkets consist of gold chains, or chaplets of pearls, with medallions set in diamonds, hung round the neck ; rings set with precious stones on the fingers ; massive gold bracelets ;

bangles of gold or silver above the elbow, usually containing scraps of parchment, on which are written mantras or talismans; silver rings on the toes; and a girdle of gold thread.

The custom of inscribing certain emblems on the face and figure, with various colours, is universal. The most common and simple—named the *Pottu*—is a small circular mark, about an inch in diameter, painted in yellow, black, or red, in the centre of the forehead. Others describe horizontal lines between the eyebrows, and even ornament the neck, breast, and lips with curious figures, which give a most ferocious expression to the wearer. Some fanatics rub their bodies all over with ashes, but the Brahmins only use them to make a small line in the middle of the forehead, after their ablutions are over. To be without this mark is a sign of mourning, or of fasting, or of being still unclean, and no one dares go abroad lacking this adornment. It is not so necessary for the women, though they usually ornament themselves somewhat after the same manner with saffron. This may seem thoroughly ridiculous to us; but the Hindoos also find cause for mocking in the European fashion of dyeing the hair and painting the face, and, above all, in wearing wigs or false hair, taken from the heads of corpses. Nothing, of course, would induce them to pollute themselves by such means, and our hairdressers would never make a fortune in their country.



CHAPTER X.

Cities, Villages, and Dwelling-houses—Salutations—Rules of Politeness—Games—Travelling.

THE simplicity of the Hindoo houses corresponds with that of their costumes. They are usually built of earth and thatched with straw, but can scarcely be called luxurious, or even comfortable. Their dwellings are generally arranged in a uniform manner, with a court in the centre, from which there are entrances into small dark apartments, without air or light, except what issues through the door and galleries outside.

The women are always confined to the house, and do not receive visits from the men, who assemble in a sort of alcove or portico at the entrance of the house, and sit with crossed legs, conversing on the topics of the day, religion, politics, &c.

In the larger towns are to be seen one or more public buildings, known to Europeans under the name of *choultries*. These are nothing more than large sheds, shut in on three sides, and serving at the same time many different purposes. Travellers seek shelter under the awnings, and crowds assemble there to conclude business

and seek justice; sometimes even to perform religious ceremonies, when there is no edifice set apart for worship. The villages are built in the most irregular way, and show neither taste nor symmetry, except in the principal street, where the market is held; there the houses of the Pariahs are a trifle less dirty than elsewhere. All refuse is shot into a ditch just in front of them, from whence,



ORIENTAL VERANDAH.

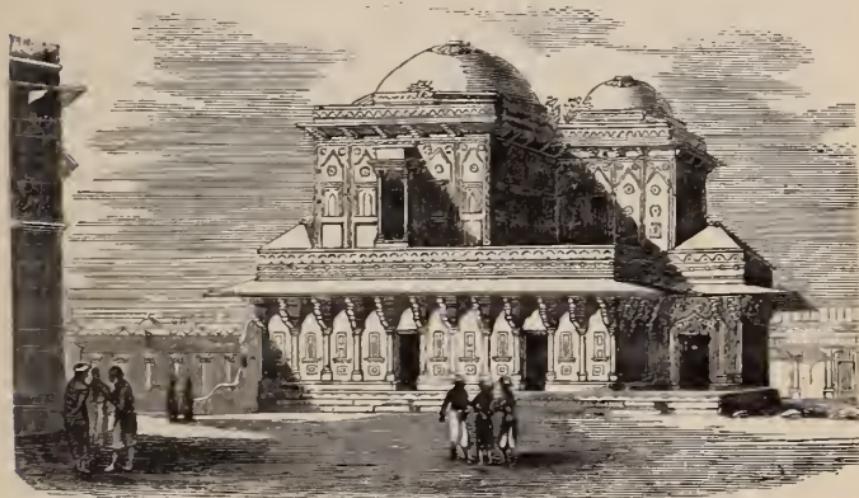
during the rains, a frightful stench arises. Happily the houses are built of such inflammable materials that they rapidly disappear under the influence of fire.

The large towns are not much better than the villages. The houses are, indeed, for the most part tiled, but the



STREET IN LAHORE.

streets are quite as narrow, scarcely allowing two persons to walk abreast, and in the middle runs the invariable sewer. The crowd is incessant—pushing, screaming, and making way for nothing but the sacred cows, who alone march on undisturbed. The shops are open to the street, and have their goods set out upon shelves or stalls, whence purchasers make their selection. The most frequented are those of the confectioners, fruiterers, corn-factors, druggists



INDIAN PALACE.

ironmongers, and tobacco-sellers. But it must not be supposed from this that the Hindoo cities are destitute of fine buildings. On the contrary, in most of the principal towns may be found edifices of great architectural beauty, though the hovels by which they are surrounded detract greatly from their appearance. The above woodcut will give a just idea of a Hindoo palace.

The municipal offices of the towns are not, like those

of the villages, hereditary. They are filled by employés of the Government, and by the police and tax-gatherers; but each caste elects a delegate, who shares the power with the Government official.

The chief men of the town are the bankers and merchants; and woe to those who borrow from these crafty men of business—ruin will speedily overtake them. The traders lead very frugal lives, never caring for luxury; but they occasionally give splendid family fêtes, and also spend large sums on public works.

Every office is overrun by numbers of candidates, each little detail being fulfilled to the letter by the person appointed to perform it, who would utterly refuse to take upon himself any additional duty. A great man is bound to have a different accountant for his stables, his falconry, his kitchen, his clothes, and his amusements; and these worthies employ their many leisure hours in making mischief and mixing in intrigues.

Most of the Indian towns are sufficiently fortified to ensure them from a sudden attack. Life in the country is certainly less comfortable than in the town. A labourer's cottage would appear to us totally unfurnished. It contains a mat to sit upon; a bed without curtains or covering, propped against the wall in the day-time; some earthenware jugs and plates; a hand-mill, a mortar, and an iron plate for cutting bread on. All the cooking is done under an outside shed.

The farmers are continually in debt, for the produce of the soil is never sufficient to pay the rent, and they

are obliged to borrow at an enormous interest. But the general improvidence of the natives infects them also, and, if they could, they would never think of saving money. Still they are a quiet, peaceable race, quite free from excess of any kind, and lead tolerably happy lives, finding some compensation for their poverty in the patriarchal simplicity of their existence. They are continually in the open air, rising before dawn, and sleeping during the heat of the day; after work is over, they return to supper in their huts, and finish the day smoking and talking to their neighbours.

The laws of politeness in India are peculiar and complicated. When a man meets a friend, he lays his right hand on his heart, and bids him good-day. If he meets a Brahmin or Guru, he touches the earth with his hands, and then lays them on his forehead; and the Brahmin responds by stretching out his right hand, and pronouncing the single word *asirvadam*, “benediction.”

The salutation of a junior to a senior, or of a son to his father, consists in lowering both hands to the feet of the person to be honoured; whilst the method of craving pardon for an offence consists in seizing the feet of the superior, and detaining them until the petition is granted.

When a Hindoo pays a visit of ceremony, he stops at some little distance from the house, and sends a messenger to announce his approach. His friends hasten to meet him, and conduct him in-doors to the sound of



ORIENTAL HAND-MILL.

music, but they neither shake hands nor embrace. These modes of salutation are quite contrary to custom, and are not permissible, even between near relations; with the single exception that, on visits of condolence, persons of the same sex may feign an embrace, but without allowing their cheeks to touch. Women offer a respectful salutation to men, with their eyes modestly cast down; and children welcome their parents in the same manner, standing before them with their arms crossed on their breasts.

Their rules of politeness are exactly contrary to ours. It is a grave offence to congratulate a person on his good health, and is supposed to proceed from jealousy of his prosperity; the common form of address is therefore, "How you are changed! You are quite thin, and look very ill."

A Hindoo always conducts his visitor to the door of his house, letting him walk first; and, if the host is of superior rank, the guest walks sideways in front of him, to obviate the necessity of turning his back to him.

When a Hindoo sneezes, he instantly cries out, "Rama, Rama!" and a Brahmin always snaps his fingers after yawning, to drive away the demons. A man must make immediate reparation for an accidental offence, such as treading in the footsteps of another. A blow with the bare fist or foot is not thought much of; but knocking off a native's turban, or kicking him with a shoe on, are insults such as would cause exclusion from the caste if not at once atoned for. An inferior must always put his hand before his mouth when speaking to one above him, for fear the breath, or any particle of moisture, should

pollute him. It is also the invariable rule to take off the shoes at the entrance of a house; even the master of it dare not enter with leather on his feet.

A member of the higher classes will always put his hands behind him, as a mark of disdain, when talking to an inferior or a European; and will hasten to sit down, before he has been invited to do so, for the same reason.

The women cover their faces, lower their eyes, and turn their backs upon men of rank, or rather the law enjoins them to do so; but they are not always strictly obedient.

The houses of the rich Hindoos are luxuriously arranged. The doors and wainscoting are finely carved. The curtains are of silk, and the floors covered with rich carpets. Their food is always plain, composed principally of vegetables, unleavened bread, oil, butter, and spices. The repast is served on plates made of leaves, in order that there may be no fear of pollution, from eating off dishes which have been formerly used by those of another caste. Twenty or thirty different dishes are placed before each guest, who feeds himself with his fingers, and washes his hands before and after the repast. They sit upon the bare boards, and at feasts of ceremony, instead of a cloth, the table is covered with sand, arranged in different patterns, with flowers planted in it at intervals. The great fear of pollution causes all those people who are obliged to live away from home, such as soldiers, to cook for themselves, and to eat in solitude.

Tobacco is the standard luxury of both rich and poor, opium is also used to a great extent in the West of India;

but the betel is universally chewed. Drunkenness is very rare, and confined to the lower classes; but the use of spirits has become common in the districts governed by the English.

The games mostly in vogue with the Hindoos are chess, backgammon, and cards, which latter are usually round, and ornamented with the images of their gods and idols. They love to listen to slow monotonous chants, accompanied by graceful languid movements, scarcely to be called a dance. For lighting their houses they use lamps of metal or clay, sometimes even European candles; and for outdoor illumination they have torches, carried by men, who feed them with oil.

Europeans and the more wealthy natives usually perform their journeys in palanquins, a kind of large, roomy sedan chair, carried on men's shoulders. Each palanquin is accompanied by sixteen bearers; two mussalchees, who carry torches made of strips of cotton, tightly bound together, and dipped in oil or other inflammable material; and coolies, laden with the most necessary portion of the traveller's luggage. The bearers convey their burden at a swift run, and keep up a monotonous song throughout the whole journey. Mr. Acland says—"I ought to mention the chant of the palanquin-bearers; though they keep to the same sing-song tune, yet they generally invent the words as they go along. I will give a sample, as well as I could make it out, of what my bearers sang the other night. I have tried to render their words, as nearly as I could, into English, so as to preserve the metre. Each



TRAVELLING "DAWK."

line is sung in a different voice; in the following, for instance, the first line would be sung in the usual voice, the second very high, the third in a sort of gruff tone:—

‘ Oh, what a heavy bag !
No ; it’s an elephant.
He is an awful weight.
Let’s throw his palkee down ;
Let’s set him in the mud ;
Let’s leave him to his fate.
No, for he’ll be angry then ;
Ay, and he will beat us then,
With a thick stick ;
Then let’s make haste and get along ;
Jump along quick.’

And then, suiting the action to the word, off they set in a nasty jog-trot, which rattled every bone in my body, keeping chorus all the time of, ‘ jump along quick, jump along quick,’ until they were obliged to stop for laughing.”

Torches are absolutely essential at night, to scare away the tiger lurking by the roadside for his prey, and to prevent the almost naked bearers from treading on snakes, or other noxious reptiles. A Rajah is commonly attended by his mounted body-guard, as will be seen in the engraving. “Travelling dawk” is very picturesque, but exceedingly disagreeable, for though the palanquin permits of its occupant reclining at length, the confined position soon induces cramp. Railways have, in a great measure, done away with this method of performing a journey.

The Hindoos are excellent horsemen; the Mahrattas are especially celebrated for their skill in the art. Their stirrups are short, their bits light and solid, and their



well-trained horses are taught to dart so rapidly at their opponent that he has not time to put himself upon his guard. The higher classes delight in hunting, and game is plentiful. They have large packs of hounds, with which they run down deer, wolves, hares, and wild boars; and they also attack more dangerous game, such as tigers and lions, with great courage and success. For the capture of antelopes the hunting leopard or cheetah is frequently employed. The animal is hooded and conducted to the vicinity of its prey in a cart. When slipped, it bounds away with amazing rapidity, and, unless the distance is very great, the cheetah seldom fails to strike down one of the herd.

The Hindoos shoot tolerably well on horseback, but not with the unerring precision of the Mahomedans. When the light troops are about to engage, they rush upon each other and return, advance again, and again retire, until the enemy exposes a weak point, when a shower of spears is instantly hurled at them.



CHEETAH, OR HUNTING LEOPARD.



CHAPTER XI.

Marriage—Widows—Suttee—General Campbell's description of a Suttee—Adoption.

THE ceremonies of marriage are not particularly interesting. The hands of the pair are tied together by a string made of sacred grass, and they then take seven steps, stopping with all solemnity between each, and uttering a special prayer. The chief ceremony takes place when the bridegroom goes to demand his bride of her father. In old times a cow was killed on this occasion, but now it is the fashion for the son-in-law to intercede for the life of the animal.

The marriages of princes are attended by most magnificent displays, and, in Bengal especially, have been known to cost many thousands of pounds. The women dress very much like the men, and wear quantities of jewellery; but they are treated as in every respect their inferiors. They do not eat till the men are satisfied; they walk behind them in the streets, and are often beaten and ill-treated, with no possibility of obtaining redress. Indeed, the laws laid down for the conduct of married women

seem made for the purpose of reducing them to a complete state of subjection.

The husband is the god of the wife, and she must consecrate her whole life to him. Whatever may be his vices or defects, she must act as if they were not; she must receive his carelessness or ill-treatment with humility, and welcome him always with smiles and cheerfulness. She must restrain all anger and ill-temper before him, and offer always respect, admiration, and loving care to her master and deity. When he dies, she must die too, in order to gain the felicity of living with him in the world to which he has departed.

The mother-in-law acts with great tyranny to her son's wife. The younger woman is obliged to obey every behest without remonstrance, and, indeed, may reply only by signs, not daring to speak to the old lady.

A widow exhibits her grief in the most exaggerated manner, throwing herself frantically on the dead body, and embracing it with sobs and shrieks, until she is forcibly removed; when she rolls on the ground, tearing her hair, smiting her breast, addressing the most heart-rending reproaches to the corpse, and hurling blasphemies and imprecations against the gods, until her strength is exhausted, and she lies fainting on the ground. But this is no natural expression of despair, it is the ceremony enacted for such an occasion; and in some parts of India, as in ancient Rome and Greece, hired mourners come to assist at these rites. They sit in rows round the corpse, half-naked and dishevelled, and amidst their tears and

sobs address long exhortations to the dead, enumerating his virtues, bemoaning his too early loss, reproaching him for his death, and, finally, declaring that it was the greatest folly of which he could have been guilty.

The unfortunate widow is regarded with opprobrium, and can look forward to no further happiness in life. Though she may be scarcely more than a child, she must retire from all the pleasures of the world, and continue her mourning for the rest of her life. She must shave her head once a-month in presence of her family, divest herself of all her jewels, wear only white garments, and never again dye her face with yellow, trace the usual ornamental marks on her forehead, chew betel, or assist at the family fêtes.

But a widow, even under these conditions, is happier than she who marries again, for such a one is looked upon with utter contempt and disdain. Not that they are often tempted to a second marriage, for universal opinion on the subject is so strong, that the oldest and poorest Brahmin will generally prefer his lonely lot, to a marriage with a widow, deprived of all her beauty and fortune. Added to this, the naturally chaste temperament of native women, their educational system, the vigilance of their parents, and the strictness of manners in the country, which forbids any familiar intercourse between males and females, are natural explanations of the well-known virtue of Hindoo women.

The wretched condition forced on widows by national custom causes many of them to prefer being burnt on

the pile with their dead husbands. This usage is happily becoming every year less frequent; but the first efforts of Europeans to put a check to it added the incitement of vanity to that of a desire to escape from the miserable lives allotted to them; and in the year 1817, there were no fewer than 706 of these sad sacrifices in the presidency of Bengal alone.

The priests work upon the feelings of the unfortunate widows, by inspiring them with the hope of renown and canonisation after death. They promise them a sort of apotheosis, address to them vows and prayers, and beg for their intercession in times of trouble, as though they were saints. Their remains are carefully collected and placed under a monument, to mark the spot of their heroic sacrifice. The relations of the victim also strain their powers to the utmost to obtain her consent; and if she wavers, have been known to use drugs, and convey her to the fatal spot in a state of unconsciousness.

Having once pronounced her willingness to die with her husband, her people will hear of no retraction, and if she resists, they carry her by main force to the pile.

The Brahmins congratulate her and her relatives on her heroism, and on the glory she will acquire by a death which will create her a divinity. They use every means to sustain her courage and increase her enthusiasm, and she is carried to the pile with every sign of joy, dressed in the richest garments, and covered with jewels.

When a man has several legitimate wives, as is the case with the Rajahs, they dispute among themselves which

shall have the honour of accompanying the husband to the funeral pile.

Francois Bernier relates how he once endeavoured to dissuade a widow from her resolution of being burnt, and at last succeeded, by promising her a pension for her children, and asserting that if she carried out her project he should let them starve. It is not considered wrong for a woman who has children to refuse to immolate herself for the sake of her little ones. Sometimes the poor creatures are overcome with fright at the last moment, and try to escape; but the surrounding Brahmins seize them and beat them back into the flames, tying them down if they continue to resist, and drowning their shrieks with discordant music. They have the charity to sprinkle the wood with oil and butter, to shorten the trial as much as possible. Sometimes the servants of the widow have been known to cast themselves into the flames, having sworn not to survive their mistress.

Occasionally other circumstances have added to the horror of these dramas. There is a story of a young Indian woman who had carried on an intrigue with a Mahomedan, and finally, hoping he would marry her, poisoned her husband, and proposed to fly with her betrayer. This, from fear of the consequences, he refused to do. She expressed no emotion, but instantly went to her friends, and announced the sudden death of her husband, and her resolution to be burned with him. Greatly delighted at the honour which would thus accrue to the family, they at once made preparations for the event; and

when all was ready, she beckoned to the Mahomedan to speak to her, suddenly seized him by the neck, and dragged him with her into the flames, where they both perished..

In 1829, Lord William Bentinck, then Governor-General of India, enacted a law, declaring all aid, assistance, or participation in any act of suttee to be murder, and punishable as such. This law, at first only applicable to Bengal, was soon extended over all the Company's territories, and, wherever possible, incorporated in the treaties made with the native princes. It met with the most violent opposition, the Brahmins even sending an agent to England to procure its repeal. Suttee is still occasionally, though rarely, practised in the subsidiary governments of India; but though now virtually abolished, the subject is one of such interest that we venture to present the reader with a most graphic account of this abominable rite, extracted from *My Indian Journal*, by General Walter Campbell.

"The 'suttee' took place at a village a few miles from our camp, and, horrible as it may sound to stand by and see a fellow-creature—a woman—burnt to death, yet my brother and the young civilian, being the only magistrates in the neighbourhood, considered it their duty to attend the ceremony, in hopes of dissuading the infatuated victim from her purpose; or, failing of this, at least to rescue her in the event of her springing off the pile. For if no Europeans were present, the brutal Brahmins would, under such circumstances, thrust her back into the flames; and

instances have occurred where the woman's life has been saved by the interposition of a magistrate, even after the fatal pile had been lighted. When we arrived at the spot, we found a number of Brahmins erecting the funeral pile close to the sea; and it excited feelings of unutterable disgust, to see the relations of the unfortunate widow laughing and jesting as they arranged the horrid apparatus. They appeared to look forward with pleasure to the approaching tragedy; and no one seemed to bestow a thought on the fearful sufferings which the victim of superstition must endure ere the sacrifice was completed. The pile was composed of logs of wood, interspersed with layers of dry straw, sugar-canies, and other combustibles; this was covered with a mat, and, to render it still more inflammable, was saturated with 'ghee,' or clarified butter. The height of the erection might be about four feet, the breadth being just sufficient to admit of two bodies lying side by side; and above it was a platform of dry wood, so constructed as to fall upon the bodies as soon as the fire consumed the slight props by which it was supported.

"After about two hours spent in building the pile, a confused din of trumpets and tomtoms announced the arrival of the widow, preceded by the corpse of her husband, and followed by a crowd of friends and relations. She was a beautiful young creature, not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age, and my blood ran cold as I saw her led forth like a lamb to the slaughter. Much as I had heard of the courage displayed by Indian women in

the act of self-immolation, I did not believe it possible that one so young, and of so delicate a frame as the present victim, could behold the dreadful apparatus prepared for her destruction without a shudder. But no traces, either of sorrow or of fear, were visible on her placid countenance. She seemed to have taken leave of this world for ever, and to have fixed her every thought on the prospect of meeting her husband in eternity. Her pale interesting features gave the most perfect idea of resignation; and her firm step and self-possessed manner satisfied us that no exciting or stupefying drugs had been administered to prepare her for the awful ceremony.

"We had come determined to save the poor creature if possible, and were more than ever anxious to do so now that we had seen her.

"Whilst the corpse was being prepared for the funeral pile, we insisted on being allowed an interview with the intended victim, and made use of every argument we could think of to dissuade her from her purpose. We offered to make her a handsome allowance for life, and to protect her from the malice of the priests, if she only consented to live; but all was of no avail. The accursed Brahmins had done their work too well.

"If a widow refuses to sacrifice herself, those crafty hypocrites, those ministers of the devil, expel her from her caste with curses and ignominy; she is looked upon as a degraded being; she cannot marry again; she becomes an outcast, shunned and despised by all; and even her nearest relatives dare not countenance her. In the temples

women are daily exhorted to this act of self-immolation by promises of eternal happiness, and threatened with poverty, scorn, and infamy if they allow the natural love of life to prevail. Is it then to be wondered at that poor ignorant creatures, thus urged and threatened by a crafty priesthood, prefer death—even a fiery death on the funeral pile—to life purchased at such a price ?

“The poor girl appeared grateful for the interest we took in her, and a tear—the first we had seen her shed—trembled on her long silken eyelashes as she thanked us; but her resolution remained unshaken. She presented each of us with a cocoa-nut, which she begged us to keep for her sake; and waving her hand with the air of an inspired being, she motioned us to withdraw.

“To my dying day I shall never forget that scene.

“As we turned to depart, I saw a devilish smile of triumph steal over the countenance of the officiating priest.

“The corpse having been stripped, and washed in the sea, was stretched, naked as it was, upon the ground in front of the funeral pile; and the widow, seating herself at the head, prepared to take leave of her relations. It was very affecting to see her aged mother throw herself at her daughter’s feet, kiss them, and bid her farewell.

“The poor girl’s firmness could not withstand this trial; she wept bitterly, but it was only for a moment. Waving her hand, as if wishing to be left to her own thoughts, she appeared to forget everything upon earth, and with her face raised to heaven called incessantly on her gods. Her attitude was that of intense devotion; and, except

when disturbed by persons kissing her feet, or making her touch cocoa-nuts, which are then esteemed holy, she never moved a limb.

“During this time the priests chanted passages from their sacred book, promising eternal happiness to their poor victim if she kept up her courage and completed the sacrifice. When they had finished, the corpse was laid upon the funeral pile, and the widow, unassisted, walked three times round it. Having completed the third round, her little brother knelt at her feet and kissed them, while her father poured oil upon her head; and the unfeeling monsters who surrounded her—many of them women—raised a joyful shout, mingled with peals of laughter, as if exulting at the near approach of the last awful ceremony. It was fearful to behold such hardness of heart, particularly among women.

“The young widow’s earthly career was now drawing rapidly to a close. A few moments more, and she would be suffering the most horrible of deaths. But her eye quailed not, nor did her lips quiver. She ascended the fatal pile as if it had been her bridal-bed; and stretching herself by the side of the loathsome corpse, already in an advanced state of decay, she clasped it in her arms, and rested her beautiful head on the breast, which was literally a weltering mass of corruption.

“It was fearful to behold the living and the dead thus united—to contrast the rounded limbs and graceful figure of that fair girl, with the bloated, grinning corpse which she held in her embrace. My heart sickened at the sight,

and a feeling of deadly faintness came over me; but I had strength to see the tragedy completed.

"I was close to the pile, and watched the poor victim's countenance narrowly; it was pale as death, but perfectly placid. She never moved a muscle, and appeared more like a marble, or rather bronze image, than a living being. Even on the brink of eternity, with the prospect of so fearful a death before her eyes, the fortitude inspired by a blind and devoted superstition supported her through the trial.

"When all the preparations were completed, a horrid yell was raised, and a number of men rushed with lighted torches towards the pile, shouting, dancing, and screaming like demons. In an instant the whole was in flames. Heaps of burning straw fell on the two bodies. The death-shriek of the wretched victim was drowned amidst the roar of a thousand voices. The bickering flames rose high above the pile. All was one glowing mass of fire, and the poor creature's sufferings were ended. Once I saw her struggle, but it was only for a moment; and dreadful though her agony must have been, it could not have lasted above a few seconds. The wind was high, and the dry wood burned with such fury that in a few minutes more than half of the pile was consumed, and no one would have guessed that two human bodies were smouldering in the midst of it.

"As we turned to leave the accursed spot, the worthy doctor, who had hitherto remained a silent, but deeply-affected spectator of the dreadful ceremony, found it

impossible any longer to restrain his indignation, and, striding up to the principal Brahmin, he gave vent to his outraged feelings by damning him to his heart's content in choice Malabar, of all known languages the one most abounding in powerful anathemas.

"The haughty Brahmin, accustomed to lord it over the timid Hindoo, stood perfectly aghast at being thus bearded, in presence of his disciples, by an unbelieving Kaffir. He was 'something more than wrath,' and would doubtless have roasted poor Macphee alive had he possessed the power to do so. As it was, he had to brook the insult as best he might; while the doctor, spitting on the ground in token of his utter disgust, thrust his hands deep into his pockets, and walked away, evidently much relieved by this outpouring of his wrath.

"Since the time I write of, the Indian Government have, on the principle of 'better late than never,' succeeded in putting a stop to these barbarous sacrifices. But I look upon it as a lasting disgrace to the British nation that such diabolical cruelty should have been so long tolerated.

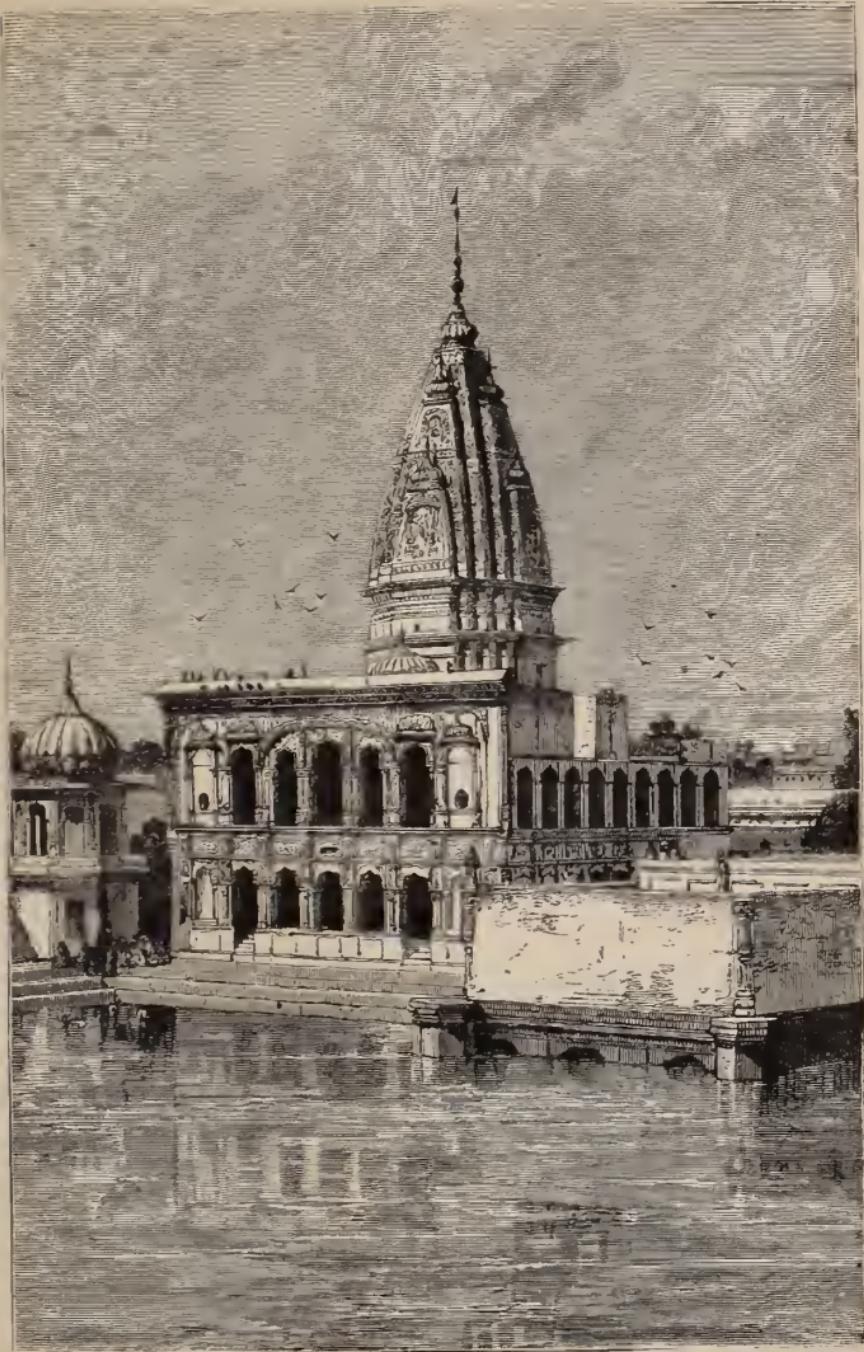
"It used to be said that it might endanger the country to interfere with the superstitious observances of the natives. A feeble excuse for still more feeble policy. Did we not, many years before, when our hold upon the country was much less firm than at the time I write of, put a stop to the unnatural practice of sacrificing female children? And what dangerous consequences ensued? None whatever; the mass of the people blessed us for our interference. Why then were 'suttees' tolerated?

Who were the instigators and perpetrators of those heathenish rites ? A very small proportion of the population. None but high-caste Brahmins burned their widows ; and had we then, as we have now, declared any one guilty of murder who assisted at such a ceremony, or by threats or promises instigated others to do so, we should not only have acted a manly and a Christian part, but have saved thousands of victims from a miserable death, and, as the result proves, without in the slightest degree diminishing our influence in the country."

Most of the Indian tribes burn their dead ; some only half consume their bodies, and allow the crows to finish the horrid task. In certain districts, when a man is about to die, they plunge him in the river up to his neck, and as he draws his last breath they let him sink to the bottom, where the soul is washed from all impurities contracted during life. In other places they carry the dying person outside the house, lay him on a bed of sacred grass, cover him with leaves of basil, and recite over him the prayers for the departing soul. As soon as he is dead, they wash and perfume the body, cover it with flowers, and extend it at full length upon the funeral pile, the priest sitting with crossed legs keeping watch over it.

In certain provinces the face of the dead is painted with carmine, and exposed to view, and the funeral cortége is accompanied by a band of musicians.

The pile of a person of middle rank is four or five feet high, and decorated with flowers. A relative of the deceased sets fire to it, and the whole family sit watching



TOMB OF RANJEET SING, LAHORE.



with tearful eyes until the mass is consumed. They are forbidden to give way to grief, and enjoined to assuage their sorrow by reciting certain passages from the sacred books.

Funeral ceremonies are carried out without regard to expense. It is said that at Calcutta, in 1824, a Hindoo family distributed alms to the amount of fifty thousand pounds at the funeral of its chief, without reckoning the costly presents made to the principal Brahmins.

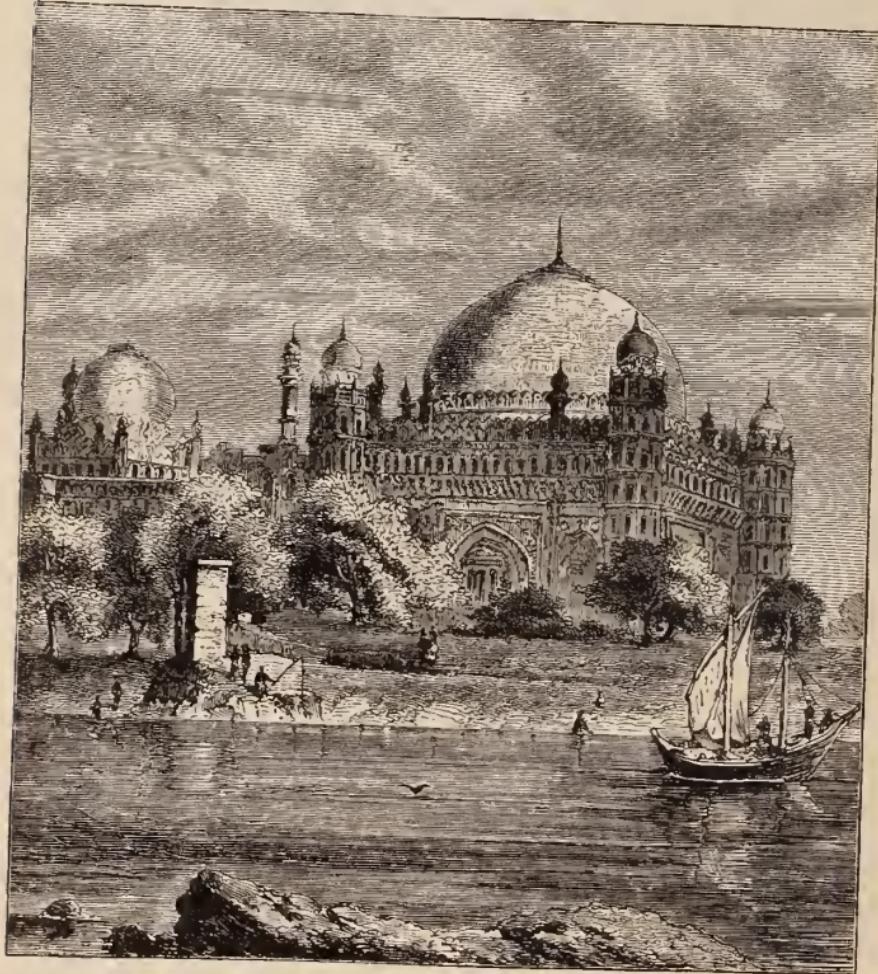
It is not usual in India to raise tombs or monuments to the dead. The only approach to this custom is the little square altars which the Hindoos erect in honour of widows who have perished by suttee, and to heroes on the field of battle.

The Mahomedan princes frequently raised magnificent mausoleums in memory of their departed relations, and nearly every large city possesses several costly sepulchres. The accompanying woodcut will show one of the most celebrated of these edifices.

The duties which devolve upon the heir during the funeral ceremonies, and throughout the year of mourning, are both numerous and troublesome; but he dare omit none of them. There is a superstition that, if a death occurs on a Saturday, some other member of the family will die before the end of the year, unless the danger is averted by the sacrifice of an animal.

A Brahmin cannot enter eternal bliss unless he leaves behind him an heir to carry on his name; therefore, if he has no son, he adopts one, or with the consent, and often

by the persuasion, of his wife, he marries again, for the danger of losing her husband's affection is more than



SULTAN MAHOMET SHAH'S MAUSOLEUM.

equalled by the dread of his leaving behind him no successor. Polygamy is tolerated only with the native princes, and taking a second wife is a much rarer occurrence than the adoption of a son.

If possible, a child belonging to the family is adopted;

but if no suitable boy can be found, the Brahmin selects one from some poor and large family, which will never refuse to part with one of its number on such advantageous terms. The adopted child entirely resigns all connection with its real father, and is brought up, educated, and finally married by him who has adopted him. At his new father's death, he succeeds to all his property, and is responsible for all his debts.

Of course the act of adoption is attended by much ceremony, in which the child's mother bears the principal part; for in India the children belong to her and not to the father, and in cases of separation she takes them with her. Saffron water is used during the ceremony, and has given rise to the name sometimes bestowed upon adopted children—the *saffron-water son* of such an one. No reproach is intended or conveyed by this term. A child may be adopted after he is of age, if it is convenient to his family. The adoption of girls is rare, but not unknown.

The question of inheritance often stirs up quarrels, and is the occasion of many crimes. Usually property is divided equally amongst all the children, and the Hindoos are greatly horrified at our law, which bestows the whole, not on the most distinguished, but on the first-born.

They have one peculiar and very unjust law, viz., that brothers are responsible for each other; and any member of a family who, by industry, has amassed money, is obliged to pay the debts of his prodigal brethren.

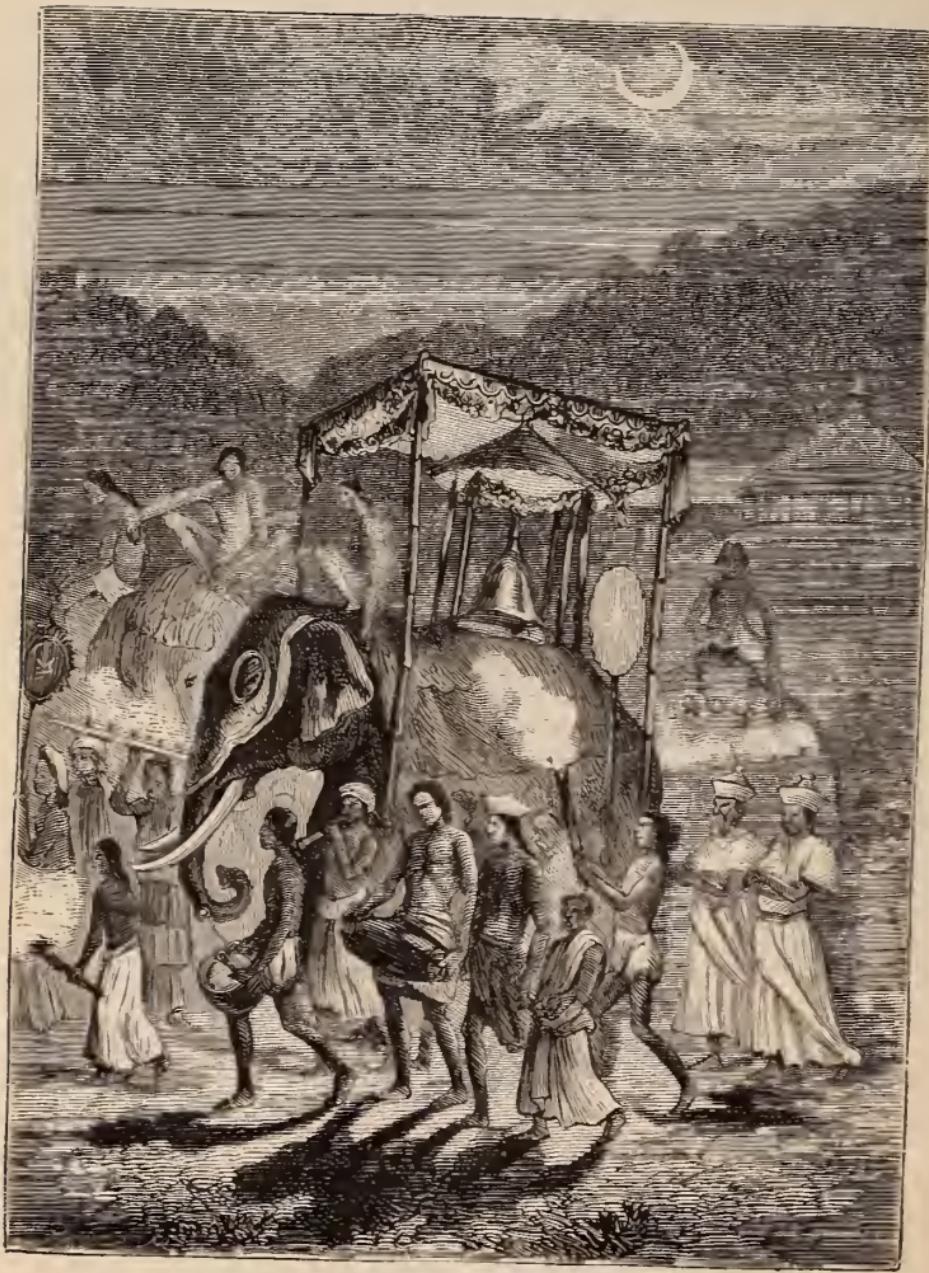


CHAPTER XII.

Fairs and Festivals—Medicine—Hindoo Physicians—Poetry and the Drama—Music—Architecture.

BEFORE describing the grand Indian festivals so often heard of, we will say a few words on the fairs, which, though on a less splendid scale, offer many attractions. These are in many ways like the fairs in Europe, and the amusements are very similar; but the general effect of the crowds of people, dressed in white, with scarves, turbans of brilliant colours, flashing jewels, well-polished weapons, floating banners, long processions, and countenances animated with joy, can be seen in no other country. Every one has come to be amused, and they give very meagre attention to the religious ceremonies which are the pretext for the gathering.

Each district of importance has its particular festivals, which occur several times a-year. No work is done on these days: every one decorates his house, and wears his best clothes and jewels; families reunite; and the whole district is full of simple, innocent amusement, resembling in no particular those other feasts held in the pagodas, which are too often scenes of revel and excess.



FESTIVAL OF THE NEW MOON.

There are eighteen principal festivals during the twelve months, foremost amongst which we may place that held on the first day of their year, called *Agrasaya*, which falls on the new moon in March, and which lasts three days, during which they expend a considerable amount of powder in firing salutes and letting off fireworks. At this time the Hindoos pay all their ceremonial visits, Government officials give account of their administration, and proprietors renew their leases. The followers of Siva celebrate the *Feast of the New Moon* in February, when they pay their respects and offer presents to their Gurus.

The September moon has its own peculiar solemnity. All tools and instruments used by the different professions are for the time looked upon as divinities, and worshipped as such. The labourer brings his plough and hoe, the mason his trowel, the carpenter his chisel and plane, the barber his razors, the writer his iron pen, the huntsman his weapons, the fisherman his nets, the tailor his scissors and needles, the women their baskets and household utensils. They set these up on a prepared and purified spot, and offer sacrifices and prayers before them; thus proving faithful to their principle of deifying any object, whether animate or inanimate, that can be either useful or pernicious.

There is a feast also for the worship of the dead, which takes place at the October moon; and attendance at this feast is so imperative, that it is said that he who has not the means for celebrating it should sell one of his children in order to procure them. It lasts nine days, and each

family offers to the manes of its ancestors the usual sacrifices, adding to them presents of new linen, suitable for both men and women, that the departed souls may be properly clothed. The students of the schools and universities make this festival especially their own. They march through the principal streets headed by the professors, chanting poems composed for the occasion, and stopping to repeat them before the houses of the principal inhabitants, who acknowledge the compliment by gifts of money, which, on the last day of the fête, is used to provide an entertainment for the young men and their masters.

This is also the soldiers' feast, when, headed by their officers, they offer prayers and sacrifices to their weapons. It is celebrated throughout the whole of India by both natives and Mahomedans, and no trouble or expense is spared to add to its attractiveness. The old Roman sports are revived, and draw great crowds of spectators. They have even fights between animals; but most interesting of all are those between the athletes, men who from infancy have been trained to the profession, and who gain their living by it. These modern gladiators go to the encounter nearly naked, and without further arms than gauntlets on the wrists furnished with sharp horns; but they use these with such effect, that both combatants are often carried from the arena with limbs broken, and covered with blood and bruises. The conqueror receives a reward proportionate to his valour and skill, and then retires to get his wounds dressed by the surgeons of his own caste.

About the beginning of December the *Feast of Lamps* is celebrated, when every street and house is decorated with coloured lanterns, in honour of fire, and also of the harvest, which is gathered in at that time. In February the credulous Hindoos pay their devotions to the venomous serpents, which are the scourge of the country, laying offerings of milk and bananas before their holes.

But the greatest fête of all is that which is called the *Pongol*, which is solemnised all over India at the end of December. It continues for three days, and commences by every native boiling rice and milk with much ceremony. At the visits paid during this festival each person accosts the other by asking, "Is the milk boiled?" to which absurd question an answer is always given in the affirmative. On the last day of the fête they ornament the cows with garlands of flowers and fruit, dye their horns different colours, and drive them out by shouts and alarming noises into the surrounding country, where they are allowed to wander as they like without restriction. The fruit which drops from their decorations is eagerly picked up and eaten by the crowd, who consider it sacred. The idols are carried in procession through the streets, accompanied by musicians and dancers; both they and the cars in which they are borne along glittering with jewels. All this show and display, together with the licence which reigns during the festivals, are craftily arranged by the priests to maintain in the minds of the people that superstitious belief which renders them such easy slaves, and out of which the Brahmins contrive to secure so large a profit. They not

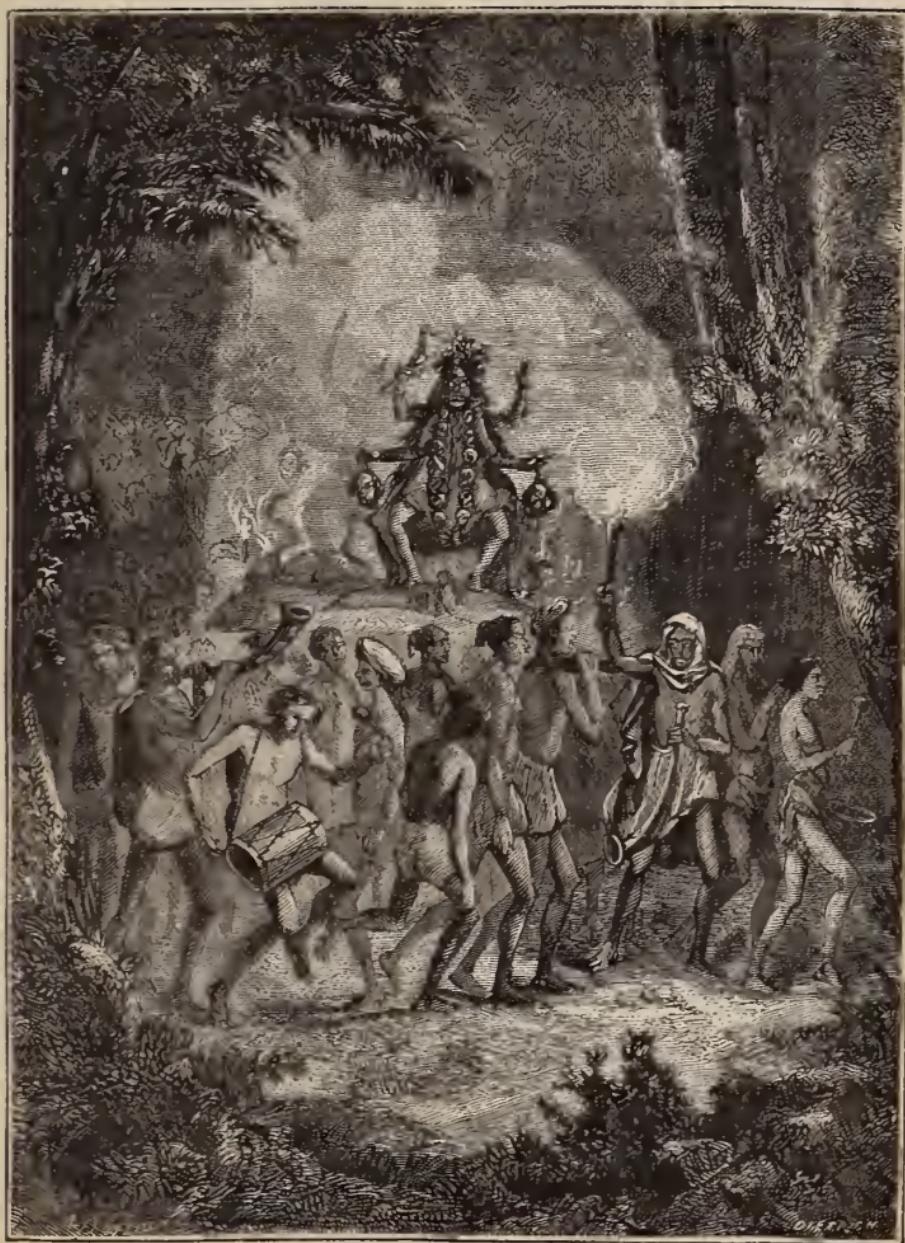
only dazzle the eyes of the ignorant by these magnificent displays, but they have recourse also to jugglery, and during these fêtes the gods perform various miracles by their hands.

The *Pongol* is brought to a close by a very simple performance. The crowd forms into an immense circle, in the middle of which a hare is let loose. The terrified little animal, after bounding about in its vain attempts to escape, is finally recaptured amid the shouts of the multitude, who then disperse, and return to their ordinary avocations.

At the feast of the goddess Kali, of which we give a representation, religious fanatics walk round the idol, blowing horns, beating drums, and contorting their bodies into extravagant attitudes. The heads which the goddess holds in either hand are now made of wood, though formerly they were human.

We will now refer in a few words to the state of the arts and sciences in India.

The study of medicine has been practised in India from the earliest ages, and the use of minerals, even of mercury and arsenic, internally applied, has been familiar to the native doctors for centuries. They form their judgment of the nature of a malady by the state of the pulse, the tongue, the skin, &c., and are considered clever in making a diagnosis, though their subsequent treatment is not so highly appreciated. The Hindoo physicians have always studied with great minuteness chemistry and pharmacy, and know so much of the nature and qualities of simples, that they have oftentimes given instruction on



FEAST OF THE GODDESS KALI.

the subject to Europeans. They are also remarkably learned in surgery, and in the ancient records are proved to have made use of one hundred and twenty-seven different instruments, rude and imperfect, it is true, as they are even to this day, but such as enabled them, for instance, to perform with success operations for cataract.

It is of course difficult for Europeans to judge of the merit of the poetry of the Hindoos, for the harmony and richness of the language, and the originality and grace of the images, cannot receive full justice in a translation. Besides this, Sanscrit, which is the poetic tongue—the language used among the learned as Latin is in Europe—enjoys an unlimited power of forming composite words, perfectly untranslatable into another tongue. It is still, however, possible to perceive, even by means of an indifferent translation, very great beauties in these poems, especially in the dramas, which are better known to Europeans than any other branch of Hindoo literature.

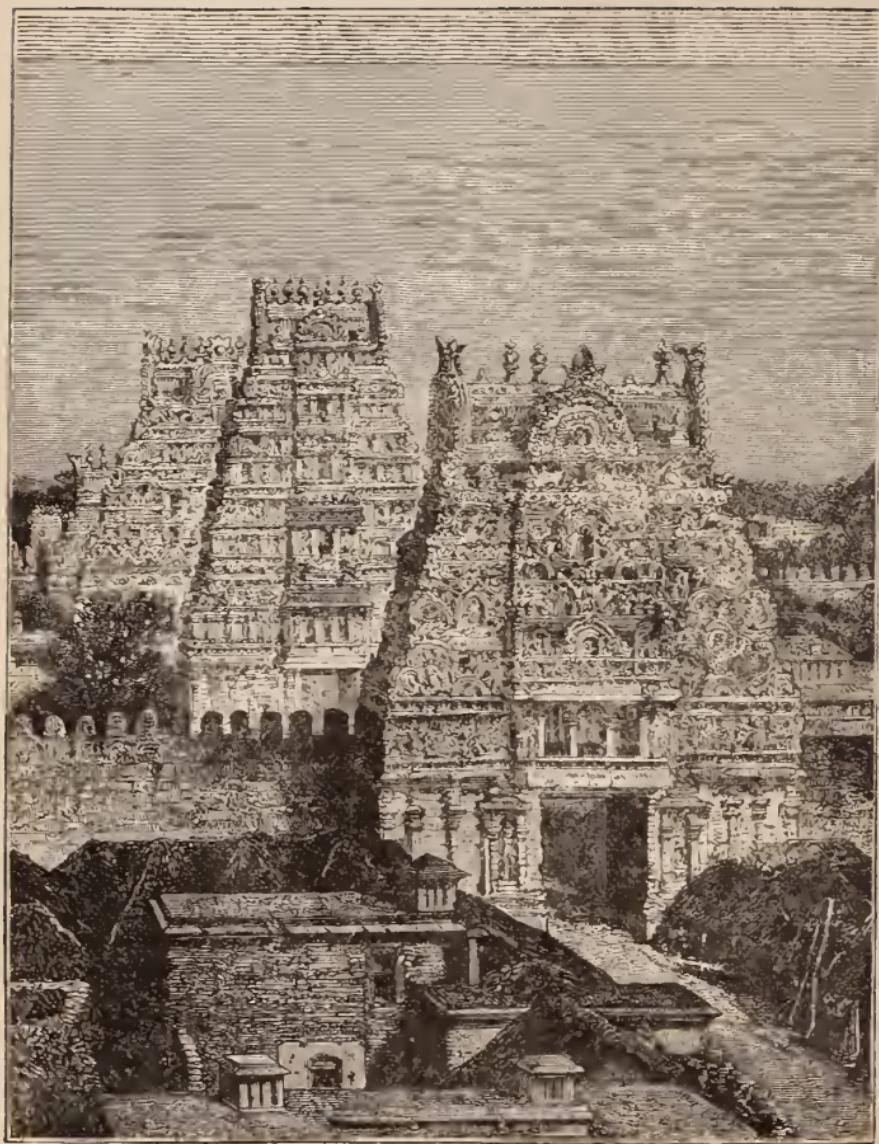
The subjects of the dramas are borrowed from the lives of heroes, the amours and wars of kings, and the intrigues of ministers, mingled with gods and nymphs, enchanters and demons; yet the interest throughout rests on thoroughly natural events, and the study of human desires and feelings. Some of the comedies give an account of the philosophic systems, and abound in shrewd remarks—showing a keen insight into human nature—and biting repartees. They consist generally of from one to ten acts, and the unities of both time and action are scrupulously observed, as in our modern pieces. The

larger dramas are very rarely played in these days. The tone of the actors is grave and declamatory; the costumes are those represented in ancient sculptures, and give an air of dignity which is not possible under the ordinary turban and garb of the country. The farces are acted with much lively action and humour, but are greatly marred by the coarseness and indecency of the subjects.

In general, the poetic compositions of the country are strongly tinctured with the individualities of the national character. Those alluding to love and similar feelings are the most worthy of admiration. The poets are capable of writing very graphic descriptions; but in the expression of powerful ideas, they fail in vigour and energy.

Besides the great sacred poem, the *Vedas*, the first part of which is composed of hymns and prayers, the *Pardñas*, and the *Tantras*, the chief Sanscrit religious works, they have the heroic poems called *Ramayana*, which tells the history of Rama, one of the incarnations of Vishnu, and *Mahabharata*, which relates the contest between two rival royal families; also numerous works on law, science, &c. Some of these, especially the *Vedas*, are supposed to be of very great antiquity.

The science of music has, like every other, greatly deteriorated in India, and its laws are so entirely forgotten that European ears cannot tolerate the performances of the string bands, though they listen with pleasure to the sweet, plaintive melodies sung to the accompaniment of the lyre—strains totally different from the music of any other nation.



AN INDIAN TEMPLE.

Indian sculpture has produced many expressive and even graceful works, but all are entirely spoiled by a thorough disregard of the laws of composition, and ignorance of anatomical proportion.

Painting is still in its infancy in India; the pictures contain neither perspective, light, nor shade; and the Hindoos have scarcely yet learned the art of taking likenesses.

Ancient Hindoo architecture may be said to resemble in several points that of ancient Egypt; but when the Mahomedans conquered India they imitated the style of the country in their mosques, and afterwards the Hindoos borrowed from them. Thus a mixed style was created, which, in the palaces, tombs, &c., of the native princes, produces a picturesque effect. Their temples are built in two styles—northern and southern. In the southern style, of which the illustration is an example, the temple is always pyramidal, and in many stories; in the northern style, the outline is curved, and the building is only one story.

The numerous monuments and books which have been preserved to the present day show that there were architects who could reduce the principles of the art to practice; but, notwithstanding the grandeur of their buildings in point of size, few have either the majesty or harmony of proportion to be found in European edifices.

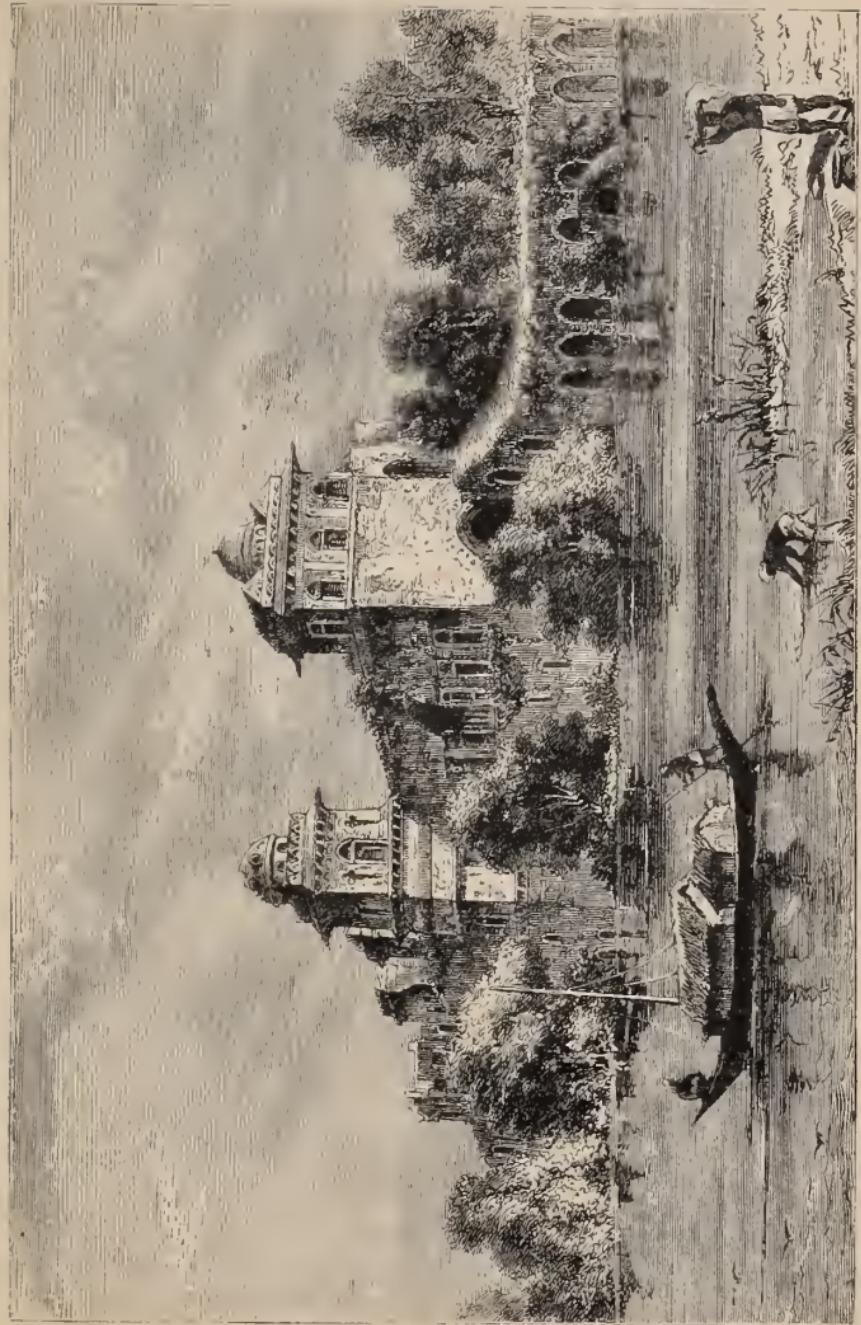
Some of the finest buildings of India are the ghauts or landing-places, erected on the banks of rivers, with their broad flights of steps, for the convenience of bathers.

"Upon these ghauts," says a traveller, "are passed the busiest and happiest hours of a Hindoo's day. Escaping from the narrow and unwholesome streets, it is a luxury for him to sit upon the open steps, and taste the fresh air of the river; so that on the ghauts are concentrated the pastimes of the idler, the duties of the devout, and much of the necessary intercourse of business."

The palaces are generally built with small courts enclosed by high walls and planted with trees, each court surrounded by a colonnade or cloister. The principal rooms are on the upper floor, and are closed in on three sides only. They are communicated with by means of a narrow upright staircase built in the thickness of the walls, which are of white stucco, or painted a dark-red outside, and are covered with paintings of trees or mythological subjects in the interior. The houses are altogether as badly arranged and as uncomfortable as possible.

The public reservoirs or tanks have been constructed at much trouble and expense. They are used as baths, and also for irrigating the soil, and in some cases form large lakes many miles in circumference. They are protected by dams of great height and marvellous solidity, and are altogether well worthy of admiration.

The bridges also attract attention. The piers are composed of immense blocks of granite, which are spanned by a single stone of enormous size. The whole is ornamented with columns and square triumphal arches, erected in honour of the heroes.



WATER-PALACE, MANDU.



CHAPTER XIII.

Domestic Slavery—Coinage—Nomads and Pariahs.

INDIAN industry has brought its different manufactures to an extraordinary degree of perfection. Notwithstanding the wars which have ravaged the country for more than a thousand years, impeding the progress of industry and ruining agriculture, and in spite of the overwhelming competition of English manufactures, we see at the exhibitions of London and Paris that India has not lost its commercial activity, and that it can shine in the midst of European civilisation.

The chief manufactures are velvet, shawls, tapestry, taffeta, dimity, cambric, muslin, silks, woollen and cotton materials, gold and silver work, mother-of-pearl, ivory, leather, &c. These articles are eagerly sought in all European markets, and are generally fine and in good taste.

A considerable coast trade is carried on between Ceylon and India, by which the agricultural and industrial products of the latter are exchanged for European merchan-

dise. The traffic of the interior of the country is almost wholly in the hands of the English, shared to a small extent by the French, Americans, Malays, Chinese, and Portuguese.

Among the chief exports are opium, cotton, pepper, saltpetre, teak-wood, sandal-wood, cocoa nuts, palm-oil, sugar, silks, and Cashmere stuffs. The silk and gold brocades of world-wide renown are the great *specialité* of the Hindoos, and in brilliancy and durability of colour cannot be equalled in Europe.

We will conclude this short sketch of Indian society by a few words on its domestic slavery, which, although existing in a very mild form, is universal in the country. Slave children are either born in the house, or sold by their parents in time of famiue, or stolen by the tribes of wandering herdsmen, who add this traffic to their ordinary occupation of selling merchandise and carrying off sheep. In many houses the slaves are better treated than the servants, for they are considered as belonging to the family, can on no account be sold, and cannot be recognised as slaves by any exterior mark. Sometimes they are attached to the soil, and change owners with it; but in reality they are almost free, and receive payment for their work. The law of Menu proves that they did not exist among the ancient Hindoos; and their number, compared to the populatiou of the country, is very insignificant.

Letters of exchange were used in India in the earliest ages. The native princes formerly struck their own coins, called rupees—worth, in Madras, two shillings each, in

some other parts a fraction more ; but the British Government now issue their own rupee, valued at an English florin. The money current amongst the natives consists of tiny shells called cowries, eighty of which make a *fanam*, twelve and a fraction of the latter being equal to a rupee, and forty-five to a star-pagoda. Gold is very scarce. Large sums are counted by lacs, consisting of 100,000 rupees ; 100 lacs make a crore ; but since commerce has spread itself in India, European money has been circulated, and is freely taken.

There are two or three of the lowest castes who have no fixed abodes, but travel from place to place, living on the credulity of the public and their superstitious love for the marvellous. These magicians, jugglers, or sorcerers—by whatever name they like to go—are avoided as adepts in witchcraft, and therefore dangerous, and at the same time they are held in the greatest contempt. Some of them stand at the corners of the roads and display their drugs for sale, announcing in loud tones their especial virtues ; others show sleight-of-hand tricks, with a dexterity that European jugglers can never excel. One of their tricks was performed in this manner :—A man, standing at the corner of a street, had with him a little child of seven years old, completely naked. When a crowd had collected, the conjuror put the child under a sort of wicker cage, where it could be still seen standing on the ground. He suddenly plunged a sabre into the cage, and drew it out streaming with the blood of the child, who uttered the most piercing shrieks ; but when he lifted the cage, the child had dis-

appeared, and was seen walking unhurt amongst the crowd begging for money.

Sometimes these vagabonds go about the country in bands, acting comedies and farces under booths erected in the streets, in which amusement is gained at the expense of refinement. They lead miserable lives, spending their earnings recklessly, and, when they are gone, starving, or depending upon charity for their daily food. The Indian snake-charmers are also celebrated (see p. 31).

The mountains of the South are inhabited by several wild and nomadic tribes, who live entirely in the open air, retiring during the rainy season into caverns in the mountains, or into the hollows of old trees. They are utterly uncivilised, and do not even use bows and arrows as means of killing the animals they consume for food, but live chiefly on roots and wild honey, which they find in clefts of the rocks and trees, or on small animals they catch in their snares. These tribes are accustomed to go naked, and fly at the approach of strangers. They are, however, very quiet and peaceable, seemingly ignorant of war, and unwilling to return evil for evil. They have the same customs with regard to purification and pollution as other Hindoos, and seem to fear nothing but being subjected to a state of slavery by their civilised neighbours. These nomads are less despised than the wretched Pariahs, for which caste is reserved all the vilest occupations, the most degrading misery, and a life of ill-treatment and subjection; but being brought up to the idea that they are born only to serve the higher castes, they accept their

destiny as irrevocable, and can never be brought to understand that all men are on an equality.

Their mode of life accounts in a great measure for the disgust which they inspire, for they alone of all the castes eat meat (sometimes even in a semi-putrid condition), they alone get intoxicated, and none but Pariahs will ill-treat their women ; they have been born slaves for generations, and have neither power nor desire to regain their liberty. The aristocrats among the Pariahs are the barbers and laundresses, who enjoy certain privileges, but are, at the same time, subject to certain harsh laws. The former act also as the surgeons of the country ; but their operations have all to be performed with no better instruments than their razors, and the bodkin or stiletto with which they trim their customers' nails. None of the artisan classes enjoy much consideration from the other castes; indeed the mechanical and liberal arts are quite out of favour ; and the players of wind instruments, which are constantly polluted with saliva, are looked upon with utter contempt.

There are numerous bands of both male and female story-tellers, who roam about the country, and gain a livelihood by the exercise of their imaginative faculties.

We have thus cursorily reviewed the characters and customs of the natives of India, and it now only remains for us to describe the principal towns, and to enumerate the European possessions in the vast peninsula.



CHAPTER XIV.

Cisgangetic India—The Parsees—The Brahmo-Somâj—Cashmere—Valley of Alligators—Chief Towns in Scinde, &c.

CISGANGETIC India, or Hindostan, is a large tract of country in Southern Asia, extending from the Himalaya Mountains in the north to Cape Comorin, the southern point of the triangle. It is separated from Thibet on the north by the Himalaya or Snowy Range—the highest chain of mountains in the world; on the west by the Suliman Range, which divides it from Affghanistan and Beloochistan; on the east by a series of wooded mountains, which separate it from Burmah; whilst on the south it projects into the Indian Ocean for about a thousand miles. Its extreme length from north to south is a little over nineteen hundred miles, and its breadth some hundred miles less.

The total area under British administration, inclusive of British Burmah and the Central Provinces, is 950,000 square miles, with a population of about 190,000,000, consisting of Hindoos, Arabs, Parsees, and Europeans, the latter principally English.

With three of these races we are all tolerably familiar; but perhaps some brief account of the fourth—the Parsees—will not prove uninteresting. The name itself indicates an inhabitant of Fars or Persia, and the Parsees are the modern followers of Zoroaster, who flourished in the year 550 b.c., and instituted the worship of the sun, or of fire as symbolic of that luminary.

Into the tenets set forth by this philosopher we cannot enter here at any length, but the essence of his religion was the recognition of two principles throughout the universe—good and evil—the ruler of the former being termed Ormuzd, and the latter, Ariman, the lord of evil. Both these deities entered into the construction of every human being, and from their united action was evolved the admixture of good and evil to be found throughout mankind. Light was typical of Ormuzd, and darkness of Ariman; hence the worship of the sun and the establishment of an undying fire on every altar, whose light counteracted the designs of Ariman, and rendered him powerless for evil. But the subject is too long to be treated fully in a volume like this, and we must confine our remarks to the Parsees of India.

They were originally—as their name indicates—inhabitants of Persia; but in that country few now remain. Bitter persecution and other causes made them seek another home, and by far the greater majority of the sect are to be found in India, where their numbers are variously estimated at from 150,000 to 200,000. Bombay may be considered their head-quarters, and the magnificent resi-

dences of some of the wealthier Parsees contribute in no small measure to the beauty of that city.

For many centuries after its foundation the religious rites of this sect were marked by extreme simplicity, neither temples nor statues being erected ; the summits of certain mountains, on which were kindled the sacred fires, answering all the requirements of their primitive faith. The performance of all rites and ceremonies was entrusted to the priests or Magi, a powerful class, who appear to have exercised great power over their lay brethren. But after their migration to India this simple form of worship became corrupted by many idolatrous Hindoo customs ; temples were erected, subterranean fires were watched over by a mysterious priesthood, and rumour laid to the charge of the Guebres, as they were termed by the Mahomedans, secret crimes of the deepest dye. Nearly a quarter of a century ago (1852) an attempt was made by the leading Parsees to restore the worship of Zoroaster to its original purity, and their efforts met with considerable success.

At the present day the Parsees manifest an earnest desire to adopt European manners and customs ; both the public and private schools at Bombay are largely attended by their children ; and their peculiar sombre dress and brimless head-covering have, in some cases, given way to the attire of their British fellow-citizens. For dignity, generosity, and an innate nobility of character, few races can equal the followers of Zoroaster.

Probably many of our readers have heard mention made



PARSEE LADY AND HER SON—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

of a new Hindoo faith, now well known as the Brahmo-Somâj, one of whose great champions, the Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, has made a tour of England within the last few years, lecturing in many of the Unitarian chapels, with which sect its doctrines are closely allied. It is foreign to the object of this volume to enter into an exhaustive examination of the tenets held by modern Hindoo reformers, whose common sense has plainly taught them that the old system of pantheistic idolatry was absurd and untenable ; but this particular sect has assumed such large proportions that some brief account of its doctrines become necessary.

Brahmo-Somâj, the Church or Society of the One God, was founded in 1830 by Rajah Rammohun Roy, who, after deeply searching the sacred writings of the Hindoos, believed that he had found, beneath the network of superincumbent superstition, records of a pure theism—of a sole God, eternal and infinite in His perfections.

To an intellectual people, who had long been labouring under the heavy yokes of caste and Brahminism, such a doctrine could not fail to be most pleasing, and many Hindoos enrolled themselves in the ranks of the reformer. From year to year the numbers increased, and at present the members of the Brahmo-Somâj maintain seven periodicals devoted to the exposition of their views and interests, and published in forms suitable to the mental capacity of all ranks.

Mr. Alexander H. Grant, who has deeply studied this subject, kindly permits us to quote the following from his article on Brahmo-Somâj in the *English Cyclopaedia* :—

"The system of the Brahmo-Somâj, as developed by Keshub Chunder Sen, presents in its religious aspects the appearance of a spiritual Theism, a combination of unitarianism or of rationalism, with ecstatic contemplation or mysticism. The existence and the moral perfection of God, the sense of duty and the immortality of the soul, are fundamental truths of which the mind has an intuitive perception. Revelation, the communication of religious knowledge by God to man, 'is subjective, not objective—a state of the mind, a process of intelligence, a truth, an actual fact of consciousness ;' and in a secondary sense it is 'an outward objective collection of principles coincident with our natural and intuitive convictions, which renders more vivid our intuitive apperceptions, and aids us in the attainment of truth and salvation. Whatever tends to enkindle noble sentiments, remove impurities, awaken faith, and bestir the will to practical virtue—whatever leads us to know and love the truth as it is in God, is fairly entitled to be called revelation ; it is immaterial where it is found.' Prayer is the great instrument of strength, courage, wisdom, righteousness, holiness—of communion with God, and of entrance into His presence. Salvation, of which every man stands imperatively in need, is a salvation from sin, not from punishment ; and the punishment which necessarily follows sin, even when it has been repented of, and the repentance accepted by God, is to be taken as a proof of His fatherly love, being intended as a chastisement and a purifying discipline. 'To every sinner, even the grossest, the promise of reconciliation

hath been made. The arms of Everlasting Mercy are stretched for the reception of all ; the fault is ours if we neglect to have recourse to Him.' All teachers who assist in the building up of the spiritual life are to be honoured and valued ; Vyasa is to be venerated by the West, and Christ is to be reverenced by the East, as the 'Prince of Prophets,' as the 'greatest and truest benefactor to mankind.' 'Jesus Christ, truly analysed, means love of God and love of man.' Religion is not dogma and is not controversy ; it is love and spirit.

" As a distinctive philanthropic association, it has been the 'endeavour of the Brahmo-Somâj to bring together and to put into one definite shape the collected truths of the Hindoo books ; and whatever was good in these—whatever was good in Hindoo life—they tried to vindicate and establish on a firm, indestructible, national basis, on which to uprear an entirely national civilisation.' Looking upon all souls as equal, and regarding caste as an 'audacious and sacrilegious violation of God's law of human brotherhood,' it seeks to elevate the lower castes of India ; to break down the institution of caste by every means, and especially by intermarriage ; to reform the Zenana system ; to educate the women, and, as a necessary preliminary, to abolish the practice of child-marriage ; to substitute the choice of the parties contracting marriage for arbitrary external dictation ; and to encourage the re-marriage of widows."

The above quotation will give the reader some general idea of the sweeping reforms contemplated by the leaders

of this growing sect; and that it is a vast stride in the right direction will, we think, be acknowledged by all who may have persued the previous chapters recounting the bondage of caste and the thraldom of a superstitious people by a corrupt hereditary priesthood.

The Eastern Peninsula, or Further India, is composed of the various countries lying between the Bay of Bengal and the Chinese Sea, viz.:—Burmah, Siam, Laos, the Empire of Anam, the Malay Peninsula, and the British possessions. The inhabitants of the Peninsula resemble, both in their language and physical conformation, the natives of the Celestial Empire, and this affinity becomes more perceptible the nearer the traveller advances to the Chinese boundary. They have all received their religion and their civilisation from India, excepting only the people of Anam.

The Indus, a noble river of 1700 miles in length, rises in Thibet, at a spot 18,000 feet above the level of the sea, and pursues a north-west course until it finds a passage between the northern-western spur of the Himalayas and the Hindoo Koosh, when it turns abruptly to the southward, and debouches in the Arabian Sea, after draining an extent of country estimated at over 400,000 square miles. During the latter part of its course the Indus traverses the Sikh territory, inhabited by a warlike, industrious, sober people, nursing an intense hatred towards Mahomedanism, and believing in a Supreme Being, to whom they address their prayers. They do not admit the distinction of castes, and eat pork, which is held in the greatest abhorrence by all other tribes.



BANKS OF THE INDUS.

The Sikh dress consists of blue trousers, gaily-coloured mantles, and rather ugly turbans; the chiefs wear gold bracelets. Their arms are matchlocks and sabres, which they venerate as others do their gods. They keep up a large force of cavalry, and are a strong, well-made race, though the women possess no particular beauty; they rejoice at the death of a comrade, and grieve over that of a favourite horse.

The Sikhs are now under the dominion of England, the little valley of Cashmere alone being still governed by a native prince. This is stated to be the paradise of India, sheltered alike from the inundations of the rainy seasons, the stifling heat of Lahore, and the icy winds of Thibet. The inhabitants are strong and handsome, and dress in a wide woollen garment; but in spite of the incursions of both Sikhs and Affghans, to which they are liable, they never overcome their habitual indolence and love of pleasure. Their chief employment is the manufacture of the well-known shawls, in which they use camels' hair and goats' wool. There are 16,000 frames and 50,000 workmen employed in this branch of industry. The method is described as very simple. A child sits under the loom with his eyes fixed upon the pattern, and instructs the weaver, who is on a bench above him, when to change the colour of the bobbins. Many small villages are dotted about the valley; but there is only one large town, Cashmere or Serinagur, containing 40,000 inhabitants, and remarkable only for its discomfort and dirt.

South of Cashmere is the land of the five rivers, or

the Punjab, the best cultivated part of India, possessing a population of over seventeen millions. In this province is situated the ancient town of Lahore, remarkable for its gardens and fine buildings, amongst which may be mentioned the splendid palace of the old Moguls, and a modern castle, built of brick. The streets are narrow and gloomy, but the bazaars are well furnished. The English have done their utmost to add to the attractions of this fine old city, which is now the northern centre of the great roads which traverse the country. Lahore is surrounded by fine gardens and promenades, and every day convenient and handsome houses are springing up and forming new streets, whilst the whole town gives evidence of the prosperity and wealth of its inhabitants, which amount to about 100,000. It boasts of a seminary, which has been so well supported that in 1849 the pupils numbered 540. It possesses also a hospital and a museum. (See illustration, page 108.)

A little to the east of Lahore is Amritsur, the Holy City of the Sikhs, containing 91,000 people. Numbers of pilgrims repair to its pretty gilded temple, which is honoured by the possession of the Books of the Law, written by the reformer Nanek. It is also the chief mart for the crystal salt of Miani; and at the door of every shop are to be seen large blocks of this salt, placed there for the benefit of the sacred cows which are kept in the town.

Besides these towns are several of less importance—Jullunder, containing 40,000 inhabitants, and possessing

no particular points of interest beyond its orchards of fig, orange, and lemon-trees; Nadaun, a commercial town on the road to Cashmere; and Kangra, an ancient fortified city, possessing a fine Hindoo temple, to which pilgrimages are made in the months of September and October.

Not far from this town is another much frequented temple, built over a cave, from which arise subterranean flames. Pious people throw their offerings of rice, almonds, sandal-wood, and so on, into the fire, and carry away the cinders as relics.

Peshawur, capital town of the province of that name, near Cabool, lies in the midst of a most fertile valley, producing the best sugar and rice, and has 60,000 inhabitants.

The province of Mooltan is bordered on the north by the Punjaub, on the south by Scinde, on the west by Affghanistan, and on the east by a desert which separates it from the rest of Hindostan. The climate is excessively hot, but the plain is watered by numerous streams, and is most fertile in the production of cotton, opium, and palms. Large bands of camels wander over the plain, which is famed for its numerous tombs, and for the numberless beggars which infest them.

Mooltan is an ancient city on the left bank of the Chenaub, about 120 miles above its junction with the Indus. It possesses some silk manufactories, and was formerly a fortress of great strength, but was finally taken by the English in 1849. It contains at least 86,000 inhabitants, including a large number of Brahmins.

Scinde lies to the south of Mooltan, and is divided into

two districts, commonly spoken of as Upper and Lower Scinde. It resembles Egypt in many respects, for it possesses a level plain, watered by a beautiful river, which fertilises the soil to a certain distance on each side. In the delta of the Indus rice is cultivated, and, further north, wheat and fruit-trees; but the climate is excessively unhealthy, and the natives are too indolent to work the land to its full capability.

The following description of a place named Peer Munga, or the Valley of Alligators, some twelve miles west of Kurrachee, written in the first year of the present century, may prove not uninteresting.

"Peer Munga is the burial-place of a saint, and a Mahomedan place of worship of great celebrity; it is also much frequented by the Hindoos, who assert that it originally belonged to them, and was then called Salla Jaffrojee. It is remarkable for two hot springs, issuing from a rock at the bottom of the mountain; but a great number of alligators kept there and regularly fed by Fakirs more particularly attract the attention of a stranger. The Fakirs constantly reside here for the purpose of feeding these animals, about two hundred in number, some of them of an enormous size and very great age. The priests have names for each of them, and wish to impress travellers with a notion that they possess great command over them; but the experience of the few journalists who have made any observations on these priests and their congregation agree that this is an imposition, for the latter neither acknowledge the names, nor the authority which bestowed



STREET IN MOOLtan.

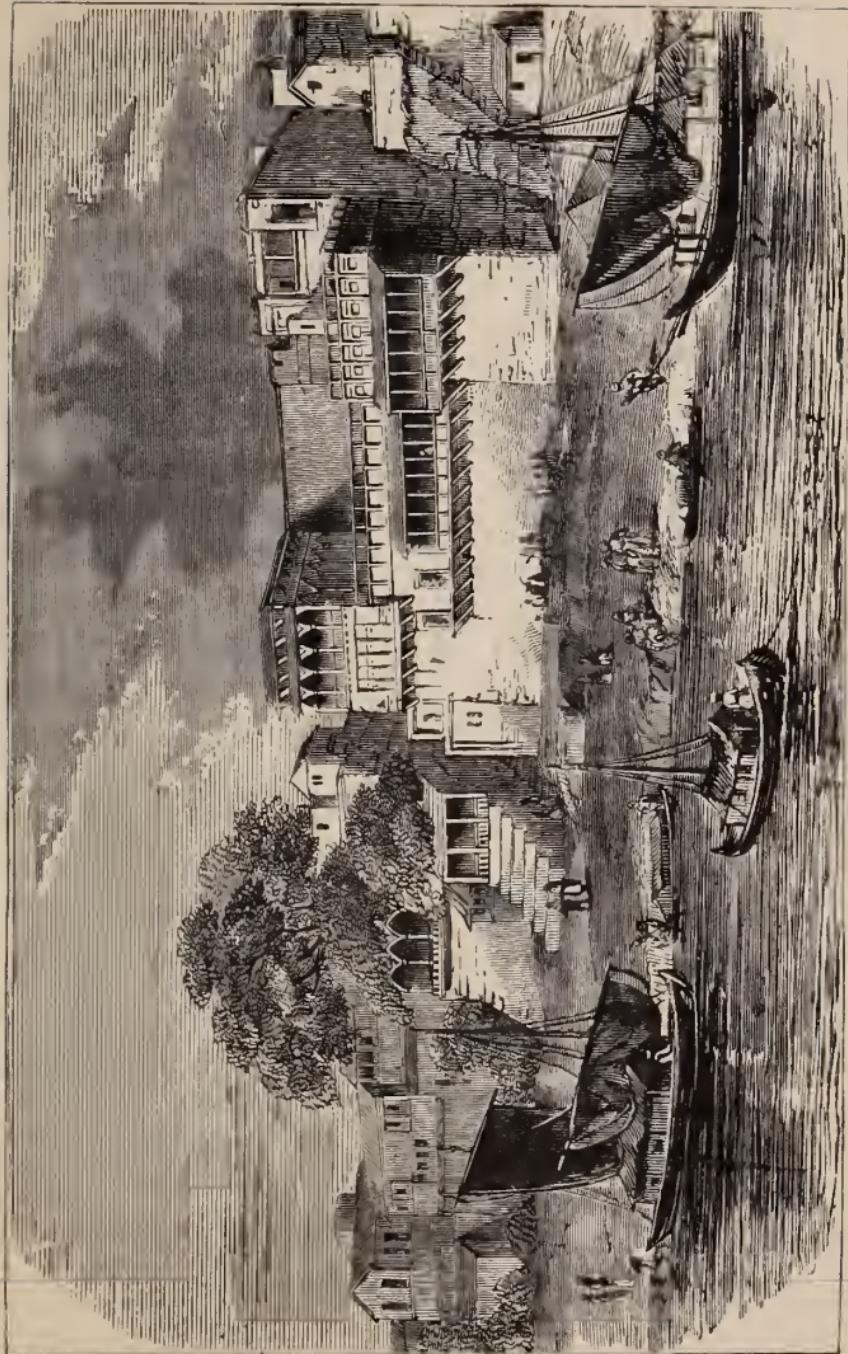
them. Several sheep and goats are, however, killed every day for the use of these monsters; and as the vicinity of their retreat is always covered with a delightful verdure, asses and other cattle are often attracted that way, and fall a prey to them. The fathers affect to distinguish from the others the oldest, whom they call *the King*, and always offer him, by way of preference, the head of a goat, which he formerly devoured greedily, to the great joy and exultation of his patrons, who considered this as a token that they were in high favour with him. He has not, however, of late years enjoyed this delicacy so keenly as he did formerly, perhaps owing to his great age diminishing the powers of digestion; and the priests have noticed this change with sorrow, as foreboding some calamity to the colony. There is neither record nor tradition regarding the first settlement of these Fakirs in this place, but it is supposed to be very remote. One of them traces his pedigree for twenty-three generations.

"While descending a pass through the adjoining mountains, this valley of alligators, constantly watered by a spring in the neighbourhood, interspersed with ever-green trees, and covered with herds of cattle, presents an interesting prospect. At its eastern extremity is a grove of trees, through which are seen the domes of two mosques, and the huts where the Fakirs reside; the whole forming a pleasing contrast with the rugged, rocky, and barren surrounding mountains, and superior to any other view in Scinde. A cistern built of stone and chunam receives the water from the spring; it is an excellent

bathing-place, and the water is supposed to possess properties that may be useful in the cure of some diseases; but the robbers which infest the road to it will probably prevent its being resorted to for that purpose. Not long ago, a caravan of thirty camels, attended by twelve men, was attacked on its way from Kurrachee to Calot by one of these mountain tribes. Eight of the men were killed in defending the property, and the camels, with the whole of their lading, consisting of merchandise to a large amount, were carried off. These mountains have been noted for many centuries past as the haunts of robbers, and their difficulty of access has hitherto prevented any attempts to remove or destroy their inhabitants. This danger renders the road over the Balroorchee mountains almost forsaken by travellers, and a circuitous route along the western bank of the Indus is preferred."

Such is a description of Peer Munga seventy-five years ago; and very much as the unknown writer describes it then, so it remains to the present day, *minus the robbers*. British rule has caused these gentry to turn their hands to some less congenial occupation, and probably at this date *the King* sleeps at peace in the stomachs of his hungry descendants, otherwise the Valley of Alligators remains unchanged.

Although of less importance than Hyderabad, Kurrachee is a flourishing seaport town, having warehouses, banks, &c., and being also the terminus of the Scinde railway, which connects it with Kotree, opposite Hyderabad, on the Indus. Its value as a commercial centre may perhaps be



PATNA—FROM THE GANGES.

better estimated when we mention that the annual exports and imports exceed £6,000,000. Kurrachee is also the terminus of the submarine cable from Muscat, and owing to this its name appears with great regularity in our journals, and renders us in a measure familiar with the place.

Patna, an important trading town, stands on the south bank of the Ganges. Under the name of *Padmavati* it is supposed to have been the capital of Behar 400 years before Christ. Its population, which is a very mixed one, is now over 300,000.

Hyderabad, the capital of Scinde, is surrounded by high walls, and defended by a strong fort, in which is one of the finest collections of arms in the world, formed by the Ameers who governed the country until it fell into the hands of the English in 1843. Amongst the smaller towns in Scinde we may mention Tatta, Shikarpoor, Sukkur, and the fortress of Bukkur. The latter is much venerated by the Mussulmans, because it possesses a hair out of Mahomet's beard, preserved in a box of gold. The immense sandy desert which stopped Alexander the Great on his victorious march lies to the eastward of this province, and on its skirts are found several towns of importance, amongst the chief of which is Ahmedabad, formerly one of the largest cities in India, and still containing over 100,000 inhabitants, though one-quarter of it is in ruins, some of which are very fine even in their decay.

At Mont Aboo, near Ahmedabad, stands a group of four temples, arranged in the form of a cross, the principal one

being to the westward. Colonel Tod says—"Beyond controversy, this is the most superb of all the temples in India, and there is not an edifice besides the Taj Mahal that can approach it." It is said to have occupied a period of fourteen years in building, and to have cost eighteen crores of rupees (£18,000,000), besides fifty-six lacs (£560,000) spent in levelling the side of the hill on which its stands.

At the south of Gujerat, on the left bank of the river Taptee, and fifteen miles from the sea, is Surat, one of the most important commercial towns in India. In spite of the near neighbourhood of Bombay, which is very prejudicial to its trade, and though it has been subjected to many reverses, Surat is still a flourishing place, numbering 150,000 inhabitants, many of whom have amassed immense wealth, and live in a state worthy of Oriental princes. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Surat ranked high as a commercial town, and is still the station of a considerable British force. The town is ugly, with narrow winding streets and high houses, but is surrounded by a wall in good repair, with semicircular bastions and battlements.

Baroda, another city of Gujerat, is the capital of the Mahratta princes, who reign under the designation of Guicowar. It contains 140,000 inhabitants, but has no remarkable buildings to give it any especial interest.

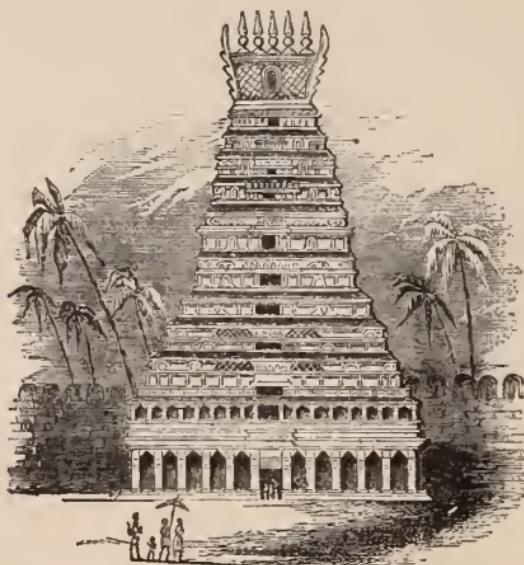
To the north-east of Gujerat, not far from the Mahrattas, live the Rajpoots, an offset from the Kshatriyas, a race formerly proud of being born soldiers, but now lost to

all chivalrous feeling, and addicted to the very worst vices. The administration of the government is in their hands, but their princes are tributary to the English.

Oodipoor is the chief town of Mewar, and is situated amidst very beautiful scenery, of which the following is a description :—“The road winds through a richly cultivated country, beautified by two fine lakes. On the borders of the smaller rise the pagodas, minarets, and marble towers of the town of Oodipoor, glittering in all the fantastic splendour of Oriental architecture. The palace of the Maharajah, or prince, is of marble, built on the side of the rock, and more resembling a fort than a royal residence; its architecture is somewhat heavy, but at a distance it has an imposing effect. The lake which lies at its feet seems fitted to be the abode of a fairy queen. It is dotted with tiny islands bright as emeralds, each embellished with a marble pavilion, and shaded by luxuriant foliage, amongst which the finest palms in India raise their lofty heads. The birds and insects are not less brilliant than the flowers, and the rocks themselves, a kind of quartz, gleam like polished silver.”

Juggernaut, or Pooree, a town in the province of Orissa, is famous as one of the chief places of pilgrimage in India, and possesses a celebrated temple in honour of Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, containing an image of that god, called Juggernaut. Once a year this idol is placed on an immense car, about thirty feet square and forty feet high, mounted on sixteen large wheels, and dragged to a tank about a mile and a-half from the temple. Formerly the

devotees assembled in very large numbers on these occasions, eager to get hold of the ropes attached to the car, and even throwing themselves before the wheels, believing that by offering themselves as a sacrifice to the idol they would ensure their admission to heaven. But of late years its popularity has greatly decreased, and, although thousands still assemble, these self-sacrifices are very rare, and the pilgrims look upon it as one of those annual fairs to which we have already referred. Indeed on one occasion it is related that, instead of the devotees struggling to get hold of the ropes, there was no one to drag the car along, and it came to a standstill in the street. (See cut, p. 62.)



ENTRANCE TO HINDOO TEMPLE.



CHAPTER XV.

Agra and Delhi—Benares—Calcutta—The Deccan—Bombay—Ceylon—
Elephant-hunting.

THE fertile province of Agra contains the fine town of the same name, which owed its splendour to the Emperor Akbar, by whom it was called Akbarabad. The chief monument which remains to tell of its former glory is the palace of Shah Jehan, now in a ruined condition; however, there are still to be seen two immense galleries, ornamented with twenty-four double columns of white marble, and also some splendidly decorated apartments. Near the palace stands the Motee Masjid, or Pearl Mosque, of which Jacquemont says:—"Its exterior, built of a dull red sandstone, does not give any sign of the beauty within, where one seems to be in a little world of white marble. There is a large square court, having a fountain in the centre for ablutions, round three sides of which runs a gallery with arcades; and opposite the entrance opens a fine vestibule, the roof of which is supported upon a forest of pillars. Above rises a large dome, flanked by two smaller ones. There are no minarets, very few of the

kiosks so common in buildings of this kind, and scarcely any mouldings in the marble, the panels of which are simply edged with a narrow black line. There is nothing to be seen of the outside world but the bushy head of a fine tree which stands in front of the entrance. All within is serene and peaceful: we may be dazzled by the brilliancy of the other buildings in Agra, but we love this pearl of mosques.”

Agra and Delhi were the two great capitals of those Mogul emperors who have played so renowned a part in Indian history, and who, though called Moguls, were, in truth, only Mahomedans from the countries bordering India on the north-west. The celebrated Taj Mahal, or “Crown of Edifices,” was built by Shah Jehan, a powerful emperor of Northern India, who said that, “as his wife was the most beautiful woman in the world, she should have the most beautiful tomb.” It stands on the right bank of the Jumna, at a short distance from Agra. At the farther end of a large and beautiful garden is a raised platform, forming an immense square, paved with white marble, with a lofty marble tower at each corner. The tomb stands like a palace in the centre of this square, a combination of grandeur and simplicity, with the most exquisite ornaments and in unsullied whiteness.

Between the Jumna and the Ganges stretch the fertile plains in which lie the ancient town of Kunnouj, and the commercial one, Muttra, which is said to be the native place of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, and where it is unlawful to interfere with the liberties or habits of



THE KOUTUB MINAR, NEAR DELHI.

the sacred bulls, monkeys, cocks, hens, and parrots, who prowl unmolested about the city.

The town of Delhi is the most ancient of the great Mahomedan capitals of India. The fortress has been partially destroyed to make room for barracks since the mutiny in 1857, and there now remain only the principal parts of the palace, which was in the middle of the fort, the council hall, the audience chamber, and the mosque. These buildings are decorated in the most artistic manner, with delicate mosaic let into the marble, and an abundance of gilding. .

Old Delhi, or rather the ruins of it, extends for many miles into the surrounding country. The most interesting monuments are, perhaps, the tombs of the emperors. Those of the Emperor Humayon, and of the Visier Safdar Jang, are almost intact, and are splendid specimens of the architecture of the time. The Kootub Minar is also very remarkable. It is a minaret of great height, probably the loftiest column in the world, commanding a fine view of the plain with its extensive ruins, and was built by one of the Mahomedan princes, the Pathans, who preceded the Moguls in Delhi.

In the time of Aurungzebe, 1658 to 1707, the population of Delhi was estimated at little under 800,000. Now, neither Delhi nor Agra have more than 100,000 inhabitants each, and, from being the capitals of the great Indian Empire, they have fallen to the rank of third-class provincial towns: for Agra is part of the north-west provinces, and a dependant of their capital, Allahabad; whilst Delhi is

annexed to the Punjab, and under the administration of Lahore. Their palaces are empty, or replaced by English barracks; and in 1858 the last of the Moguls, Mahommed Behaudur Shah, was condemned and transported for complicity in the Indian Mutiny.

To the south of Delhi lie Oudh, Bundelcund (once the stronghold of the Thugs), and Behar; and we then reach the classic ground of Benares, whence issued the science and art of India, and where, even in these days, the traditions and customs of past ages are religiously preserved, and all questions on such matters brought for decision. From all sides pilgrims flock to this their holy city, at once the Rome and the Athens of India; and from temple to temple the pilgrims move on, performing their devotions to the god Siva, to whose worship the town is chiefly dedicated. The streets are rendered almost impassable by the numerous animals which wander about undisturbed, and the doors of the temples are crowded by miserable-looking objects begging for alms. The European atmosphere of scepticism has caused many of the peculiarities of former ages to vanish, and perhaps this may account for the disappearance of those extraordinary Fakirs who were formerly so frequently seen undergoing their self-imposed penances. Sometimes a man may be still noticed at the corner of a public street, standing on one leg, and holding the other in the air with his hand; but he is probably more a mountebank than a genuine Fakir.

There are upwards of 1300 mosques and temples in Benares, but for the most part small and shabby, not even

possessing the attraction of age ; for the country along the Ganges has been so frequently devastated, that none of the buildings date more than two or three centuries back



INTERIOR OF TEMPLE, BENARES.

The architectural beauty of the Hindoo temples is exceedingly small, and the one specimen still existing of the work of the Buddhists—the Tower of Sarnah—surpasses, in the simple elegance of its decorations, all the efforts of the Brahmins in Benares. Benares, at sunrise, presents a picturesque and peculiar appearance. Along the river-banks are ghauts, or flights of broad steps, constructed of fine freestone ; and at this particular time these steps are crowded by bathers, performing their morning ablutions, and bringing with them vessels in which to carry away some of the sacred water.

The schools of the Brahmins at Benares are very famous, and their teaching is carried on, like that of the Greek philosophers, in the open air. The climate is exquisite, and soil fertile, and the number of inhabitants, now about 200,000, increases every year.

Following down the banks of the Ganges we pass the modern town of Golconda, and then enter the province of Bengal, the chief city of which, Calcutta, is the capital of all the English possessions in India. It stands on the eastern bank of the river Hooghly, the main channel of the

Ganges, about a hundred miles from the sea, and extends more than four miles along the banks of the river. Including the suburbs, it has nearly a million inhabitants, and is divided into two parts—the Black Town, consisting only of wretched thatched cottages inhabited by the natives, and the Government quarter, where the English reside, and which they have adorned with fine houses, giving to the place the name of the City of Palaces.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA.

The port, formed by the Hooghly, is crowded with shipping. In 1872 the exports amounted to over £27,000,000, exclusive of treasure, and the imports to over £15,000,000. In the same year 637 sailing vessels and 301 steamers arrived in the Hooghly, which is deep enough to permit of ships of 2000 tons burthen ascending to Calcutta. The above figures will give some idea of the enormous trade of the place. The principal exports are jute, cotton, indigo, rice, coffee, tea, sugar, &c.

CALCUTTA IN 1845.



Between the plains of the Ganges and Thibet we cross the picturesque countries of Gurwhal, Sirinagur, Kumaon (mountainous, and abounding in flocks and herds), and Nepaul, one of the few independent provinces in India. Khatmandu, the capital of Nepaul, is celebrated for its magnificent temples dedicated to Buddha, and for its band of female warriors, who form the body-guard of the Princess. The little principality of Sikkim, east of Nepaul, is governed by a Thibetian prince in alliance with England.

The fertile country in the middle of India, called the Deccan, is divided into five large provinces, of which we will name only the chief—Coromandel, Malabar, and the Mahratta country, unknown to Europeans 200 years ago, and, till the beginning of this century, the most extensive free state in India. Their constitution was a kind of military republic, composed of several independent Rajahs, under their chief, the Peishwa. The Deccan is now under the dominion of the English. Its principal towns are Poonah, Sattara, Ellora, and Golconda. The ancient chief of the Deccan was called the Nizam.

The largest and most populous town in this part of British India is Madras, containing about 400,000 inhabitants, and particularly famous for the manufacture of fine fabrics. To the southward, and also on the sea-coast, lies Pondicherry, the capital of the French possessions. These are the chief points of interest on the Coromandel coast. Between it and the coast of Malabar lie the Carnatic, and the kingdom of Mysore.

The principal town on the western shore is Bombay, the capital of the Presidency, and the seat of a Supreme Court of Justice. It is built on an island of the same name, which is connected by an artificial causeway with the larger island of Salsette. Its harbour, which is magnificent, and one of the safest in the country, has become the emporium of India. Its trade, a large portion of which is



BOMBAY.

carried on with China, is second only to that of Calcutta. Both English and Hindoo papers are published in Bombay, and its population is nearly 600,000 inhabitants, about one-half being Hindoos, and the other half chiefly Mahomedans and Parsees.

The Portuguese settlement of Goa is a short way down the coast. The city contains about 300,000 inhabitants, two-thirds of whom are Roman Catholics; but its former

grandeur has passed away, and it has fallen into an irremediable and apparently hopeless state of decay.

Malabar extends down the coast, from Canara and Coorg, to Cochin. The Laccadives, a group of islands to the south of India, may be considered a dependency of this province. They are thirty in number, but many of them are mere rocks; the others are covered with rice-fields and splendid cocoa palms. The Maldives are a remarkable chain of coral islands running from north to south, and take their name from the largest of their number, Mali, which is seven miles in circumference, and the residence of a native prince styled "The Sultan of the Twelve Thousand Isles." They produce cocoa-nut palms and the kandou, a tree whose wood is as light as cork. The islanders are a finely made, olive-tinted people, their women being often nearly white; and they are both interesting and industrious.

We now arrive at the large island of Ceylon, lying some sixty miles to the southward of Hindostan, from which it is separated by the Gulf of Manaar and Palk Strait. Although in such close proximity to British India, Ceylon is not under the control of the Governor-General, having a constitution of its own, by which the administration is placed in the hands of a governor, aided by an executive council of five members. In form the island is oval, or, more correctly speaking, of a pear shape. It runs nearly north and south, its extreme length being 266 miles, and its greatest breadth 140 miles. It is generally supposed that at one time it formed a portion of the mainland, for the Gulf of Manaar is only navigable for vessels of very

light draught, and a succession of rocks and reefs stretch away northward in the direction of Cape Comorin.

Ceylon is very mountainous, lofty ranges rising in the southern or broader part of the island, and running north, while many lateral spurs project east and west. High peaks abound in this chain, Pedrotalagalla attaining an altitude of 8280 feet, and Adam's Peak 7416 feet. The country on the sides of these ranges is remarkably fertile, particularly at the height of from two to four thousand feet above the sea-level. The low-lying lands are unhealthy, owing to swamps and dense jungle; but a sanatorium was established some years ago at a mountain station named Newera Ellia, situated some 6000 feet above the sea-level, to which the fever-stricken sufferer is enabled to retreat and recover his former vigour.

Candy, the largest inland town in Ceylon, is built on the shore of an artificial lake, over a mile in length and a quarter of a mile in breadth, which stands at an elevation of 1678 feet above the sea. Here the governor and most of the leading officials have residences, that of the former being the finest building in the island.

Adam's Peak is perhaps worthy of a short notice, being considered sacred by both Buddhists and Mahomedans. It is the second highest mountain in the island, and its summit is surrounded by a wall, within which is enclosed the impression of a gigantic foot sunk in the rock. This the Buddhists assert to be the mark left by their god when he made a spring from thence to Siam, though the Mahomedans stoutly assert that the print was left by Adam



COCOA-NUT GROVE, CEYLON.

after his expulsion from Paradise; and from this legend the Peak derives its name. There are only two small openings in the wall to enable pilgrims to enter, a feat which they perform by means of chains, for the sides are too precipitous to admit of an unassisted ascent.

Ceylon possesses several good harbours for small vessels and two for larger ships. One of them, Trincomalee, is, for its size, unrivalled in the world. Here the British Government have a dock-yard, to which the largest vessels can have access at all times.

Many vegetable products attain a high degree of excellence in Ceylon, amongst which we may mention the cinnamon, which grows wild in the forests; tobacco, pepper, cotton, rice, the betel-nut palm; coffee, which thrives so admirably that it is now the principle article of export to Great Britain; and last, but not least, innumerable groves of the cocoa-nut palm, which supplies the natives with almost every necessary for their simple existence. The nut, when green, affords food and drink of a nutritious kind; when dry, oil can be expressed from the kernel, and the fibrous husk is worked up into ropes, fishing-lines, nets, &c. The shells are used as drinking vessels; the leaves form a thatch for the frail huts; the sap, when fermented, becomes an



TALIPAT PALM, CEYLON.

intoxicating liquor known as arrack or toddy; and the trunk splits up into good material for building.

Formerly the pearl fishery was a great source of wealth to the island; but the constant drain upon the oysters nearly exterminated them. The fisheries lay untouched from 1837 to 1855; but it seems doubtful whether they will ever again become as productive as formerly.

The inhabitants of Ceylon consist of four classes—namely, the native Cingalese; the Moormen, who are of either Arab or Persian descent; the Tamils, or Malabars, from the neighbouring mainland; and the Veddahs, an aboriginal and savage race of outcasts inhabiting the mountain fastnesses. At the last census, taken in 1871, the total



THE AMBUSTELLA DAGOBA, MIHINTALLA, CEYLON.

population of the island was found to be 2,405,287. Of these the great majority were the native Cingalese, who are all followers of Buddha; in fact, Buddhism may be regarded as the religion of Ceylon.

In appearance the Cingalese are very effeminate, and it

is with great difficulty that a new-comer can distinguish the boys from the girls. The men wear a sort of petticoat, fasten up their long black hair with a comb, and carry an umbrella over their heads. The women wear a similar garment, but cover the upper part of the figure with a jacket of some light material. Many of the young women and youths have beautiful features and a most prepossessing appearance.

The island abounds with wild animals of every kind, more especially with elephants and leopards. The latter are very daring and destructive to cattle, whilst the former were at one time so numerous that the crops suffered greatly from their ravages, insomuch that the Government offered a reward of ten shillings a tail, which was afterwards reduced to seven shillings, then totally abolished; and now a game law is in force for the protection of these animals, otherwise they would soon be exterminated.

Elephants are largely used in Ceylon for transporting heavy weights, carrying the material for building bridges, and even in husbandry. Sir Samuel Baker thus describes the performances of a female elephant belonging to him during his *Eight Years in Ceylon* :—

“ It was an interesting sight to see the rough plain yielding to the power of agricultural implements, especially as some of those implements were drawn by animals not generally seen in plough harness at home.

“ The ‘cultivator,’ which was sufficiently large to anchor any twenty of the small native bullocks, looked a mere nothing behind the splendid elephant that worked it, and

cut its way through the wiry roots of the rank turf as a knife peels an apple. It was amusing to see this same elephant doing the work of three separate teams when the seed was in the ground. She first drew a pair of heavy harrows; attached to these, and following behind, were a



CAPTURED ELEPHANT.

pair of light harrows; and behind these came a roller. Thus the land had its first and second harrowing and rolling at the same time.

"This elephant was particularly sagacious; and her

farming work being completed, she was employed in making a dam across a stream. She was a very large animal, and it was beautiful to witness her wonderful sagacity in carrying and arranging the heavy timber required. The rough stems of trees from the lately-felled forest were lying within fifty yards of the spot, and the trunks required for the dam were about fifteen feet long and fourteen to eighteen inches in diameter. These she carried *in her mouth*, shifting her hold along the log before she raised it until she had obtained the exact balance; then, steadyng it with her trunk, she carried every log to the spot, and laid them across the stream in parallel rows. These she herself arranged, under the direction of her driver, with the reason apparently of a human being.

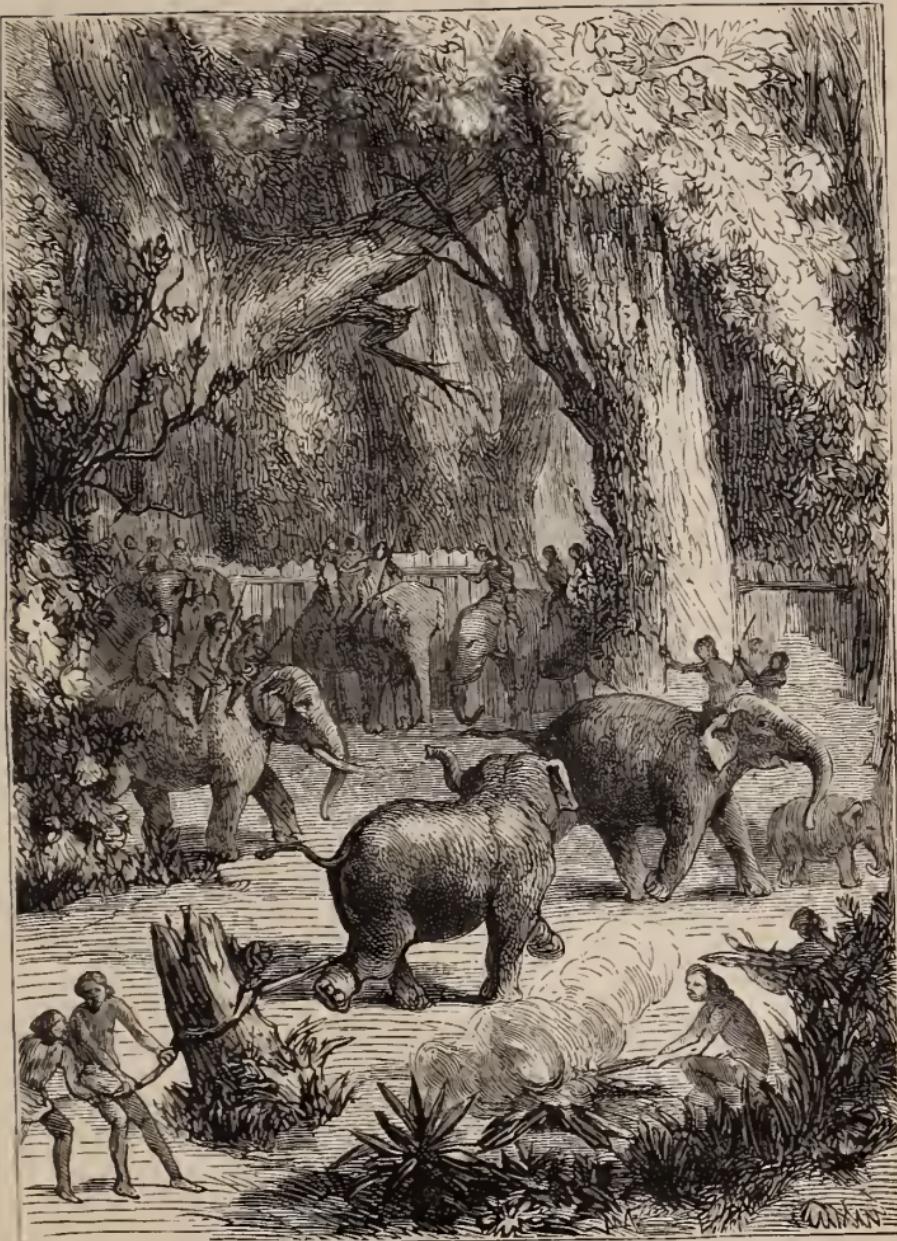
"The most extraordinary part of her performance was the arranging of two immense logs of red keenar (one of the heaviest woods). These were about eighteen feet long and two feet in diameter, and they were intended to lie on either bank of the stream, parallel to the brook and close to the edge. These she placed with the greatest care in their exact positions unassisted by any one.* She rolled them gently over with her head, then with one foot, and keeping her trunk on the opposite side of the log, she checked its way whenever its own momentum would have carried it into the stream. Although I thought the work admirably done, she did not seem quite satisfied, for she presently got into the stream, and gave one end of the log an extra push with her head, which completed her

* Directed, of course, by her driver.

task, the two trees lying exactly parallel to each other, close to the edge of either bank."

Very few of the Cingalese elephants have any tusks—not one in three hundred, says the above-quoted sportsman; but, notwithstanding, they are very dangerous animals to encounter, and display an agility of which their cumbrous forms seem quite incapable. But we have now said as much concerning the island of Ceylon as the limits of this small volume will admit of; we must, therefore, return to the mainland, and being on the subject of elephants, let us attempt to describe how these noble animals are ensnared. To say that an enclosure is made, constructed of stout logs and posts, into which the wild herd is partly lured, partly driven, would be easy enough, and the accompanying woodcut would give a better idea of the method of proceeding than many pages of print; but in the old magazine we quoted from before, when describing the Valley of Alligators, may be found a now forgotten letter from Mr. Ralph Leeke, collector of Tipperah, in the district of Chittagong, which not only gives a good idea of the means employed to domesticate the captured animals, but also affords a remarkable instance of the memory of the elephant. Though the scene is here laid in a remote part of the British possessions, elephant-hunting is conducted in the same manner throughout India.

This animal, a female, had been captured some years previously, but had twice made its escape into the hills. On the 25th of December, 1783, she was driven, with seventy other captives, into the huge enclosure belonging



ELEPHANT-HUNTING

to Mr. Leeke. Such is her previous history; but before quoting from the original, we must explain the meaning of the native terms the writer makes use of.

Juggutpeerarree, the name bestowed upon the elephant when she was first captured.

Keddah, a strong enclosure about five hundred yards in circumference, into which the elephants are driven; within it is a ditch, from nine to twelve feet deep, and from fifteen to twenty feet wide.

Roomee, a strong, narrow passage leading out of the *Keddah*, into which the elephants are enticed singly, by means of food, and then secured. Whilst thus imprisoned, they exert their utmost strength to burst the toils; rolling on the ground in their frantic rage, and screaming in impotent agony.

Koomkee, a tame female elephant, made use of to occupy the attention of the prisoner whilst he is being secured. *Koomkees* also make use of every feminine blandishment to lure the wild herd into the *keddah*, and may be regarded as four-footed Delilahs.

Mahote, the native driver, who sits upon the elephant's neck, and guides his huge charge with a pointed iron goad.

Having explained these terms, which are necessary for the proper comprehension of the narrative, we will now proceed in Mr. Leeke's own language:—

“On the 26th I went to see the elephants that were ensnared, when *Juggutpeerarree* was pointed out to me by the *mahotes* who recollects her, and particularly by

one who had charge of her for a year or two. The *mahotes* frequently called out to her by the name of *Juggutpeerarree*, to which she seemed to pay some attention by immediately looking towards them when she heard it, but did not answer to the name in the manner she was known to do when the above-mentioned *mahote* had charge of her. She appeared not like the other elephants—who were constantly running about the *keddah* in a rage—but perfectly reconciled to her confinement; nor did she, no doubt from a recollection of what she had twice before suffered, from that time to the 13th instant, ever come near the *roomee*. I had ordered, if she wanted to go into the *roomee*, not to let her, that I might be present myself when she was taken out of the *keddah*; and for this purpose I went, on the 19th instant, when there only remained in the *keddah* *Juggutpeerarree*, another large female, and eight young ones belonging to them both. After sending in the *koomkees*, and securing the large female, I told the *mahotes* to call *Juggutpeerarree*. She immediately came to the side of the ditch within the enclosure. I then sent two or three *mahotes* in to her with a plaintain tree: she came to the *mahotes*, and not only took the plaintain leaf out of their hands with her trunk, but opened her mouth for them to put the plaintain leaf into it, which they did, stroking and caressing her, and calling her by her name. The *mahotes* wanted, at first, to tie her legs by means of the *koomkees*, thinking, as she had been so long in the jungles, and had then four young ones about her, that she

was not to be trusted ; however, I insisted, as I saw the animal so very tame and harmless, that they should not attempt to tie her, and told a *mahote* to take one of the *koomkees* up to her, and take her by the ear and tell her to lie down. She did not like the *koomkees* coming near her, and went to a distance seemingly angry ; but when the *mahotes* called her she came to them immediately, and allowed them to stroke and caress her as before, and a few minutes afterwards admitted the *koomkees* to familiarity with her, when a *mahote* from one of the *koomkees* fastened a small rope round her body, and immediately from the *koomkee* jumped upon her back, which, at the instant of the man's jumping upon her, she did not seem to like ; however, was almost immediately reconciled to it : another small rope was then fastened about her neck, for the *mahote* to fix his feet in : he went upon her neck, and drove her about the *keddah* in the same manner as the other tame elephants ; he then told her to lie down, which she instantly did, nor did she rise until she was told ; the *mahote* fed her from his seat, and gave her his stick, which she took from him with her trunk and put it into her mouth, and held it for him ; in short, had there been more wild elephants in the *keddah* to tie, she would have been useful for securing them. As soon as she came out of the *keddah* I went up to her, took her by the ear, and told her to lie down, a command which she instantly obeyed. She was brought to Comilla the next day, which is about twelve miles from the *keddah*, and half-an-hour ago I had her brought to me and fed her ; and, without touching her,

told her to lie down, which she did immediately. She had four young ones of her own with her in the *keddah*, and is now very big with young.

"I have not exaggerated in the least in this account, which three other gentlemen can vouch for, having been witnesses to every material circumstance I have mentioned.

"R. L

"*COMILLA, January 15th, 1783.*"

From the above, a pretty accurate idea of the means employed for subduing the captive elephants may be drawn. But the space at our command is nearly at an end; therefore, with a few general remarks on British India we shall close this portion of the volume.

The English possessions, containing not less than 145 millions of people, are divided into three large presidencies—Madras, Bombay, and Bengal—the latter immediately under the Governor-General of India.

Upon the two noble rivers, the Ganges and the Indus, the English have established a line of steamers, which ply regularly from point to point, side by side with the native boats. They have also cut several canals, the longest of which—a stupendous work, carried at one portion over a magnificent aqueduct—drains the Doab, and is 810 miles in length.

Railways are, of course, daily increasing. On April 1st, 1874, there were 5872 miles of line open for traffic, constructed at a cost of £97,000,000, or £16,536 per mile.

The chief lines are from Calcutta to Lahore, from Bombay to Mirzapore and Calcutta, from Madras to Bombay, with a branch along the coast of Malabar, and from Kurrachee to the Indus. Pondicherry will, ere long, be connected with the grand Anglo-Indian system.

Commerce has enormously increased under the English rule. The total value of the imports and exports of the Indian Empire in 1873 were—imports, £35,817,146; exports, £56,525,574. The chief articles of export from India to the United Kingdom, in the same year, were raw cotton, of the value of £9,812,086; jute, of the value of £3,560,880; rice, of the value of £3,055,465; indigo, of the value of £2,029,850; and tea, of the value of £1,522,193.

At the time of the English conquest, the Mahomedans, who had formerly founded a powerful monarchy, and the ancient Hindoo races, were continually in arms against each other, and by their incessant conflicts condemned India to impotence and decrepitude, both morally and physically. The intellectual development, which had never been more than rudimental, came to a complete standstill; and at the time of the English conquest India was the prey of the Brahmins, and given up to the degrading and senseless practices which we have described. The English put a stop to warfare and pillage, appointed judges, raised the standard of morality, and made the education of women compulsory; and soon the contact with European civilisation produced visible results. Already the rude gods of heathenism are looked upon with contempt, and the division of castes is no longer obligatory.

Numbers of young Indians speak English perfectly, go through the university examinations with success, and enter for the bar, medicine, commerce, or any of the higher employments of social life.

The Christian religion has as yet made less progress than might be expected. The simple and dispassionate doctrines and rites of the Protestant Church are addressed more to the reason than to the imagination, and have found little sympathy on the banks of the Ganges and the Indus. The superstitious prejudices and passionate faith of the Mussulmans and Hindoos are hindrances of no mean nature; and though they may, to a certain degree, already acknowledge the reasonableness and strength of our faith, much patience and caution will be necessary before we can persuade them to embrace and to love it. But Great Britain appreciates the difficulty of the struggle, and she does not recoil from her responsible position.

The British have shown much foresight and prudence in their administration of Indian affairs, and many districts already prefer their rule to that of the Rajahs, simply because the latter fleece the unfortunate natives openly, whilst the English govern judiciously, and so distribute the necessary imposts that they fall but lightly on the conquered race. By these means the British have succeeded in rendering themselves acceptable to the rural population, for under their rule they escape the grinding taxation that broke them down when governed by native princes; and, moreover, it is known that the weak man is no longer at the mercy of his richer or more powerful

neighbour. The situation of the different classes towards the Government and towards each other is settled by fixed laws, known to all, and impartially administered. The government of the Rajahs was, from every point of view, gross despotism ; it knew only one source of revenue, the tax levied in kind on the land. The English system of finance is able but complicated, including taxes on the revenue, indirect taxes, the custom-house, and stamp-duty. Nevertheless, the British have not held their sway in the East undisturbed. Wars have been frequent, and, in some few instances, of long duration. Owing to the bad government of the native princes, or from political motives, an enormous tract of country has been annexed during the present century, notably the Punjab, Pegu, and Oude. The acquisition of the latter powerful country was, without doubt, one of the moving causes of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857-8, a terrible struggle, of which we will now give the reader a short account.





CHAPTER XVI.

THE SEPOY MUTINY OF 1857-8.

The Rising of the Storm.

AS no account of our Indian Empire, as at present constituted, would be complete without some mention of the great struggle of 1857, when the native Bengal forces rose in arms against the British, and our power in the East was shaken to its basis—nay, at one time hung upon a thread, sedition being only ultimately trampled out by the courage, heroism, and energy of the few Europeans sparsely scattered over the enormous area within which the rising occurred—I propose to lay before the reader a brief account of that momentous period, premising that want of space will only enable me to dwell upon its most prominent features, and that many minor events, though of the highest interest, as exemplifying the endurance of the actors personally concerned therein, must of necessity be passed over, or only lightly touched upon, within the pages of so short a narrative as the present one.

But, before entering into the particulars of this struggle, it will be necessary to give the reader some idea of the organisation of the Indian army of that day.

The military force in India consisted of three distinct armies, belonging to the several Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras; and of a fourth body of troops—another little army, in short—comprising the Queen's regiments serving in the East. With Bombay and Madras we have little to do in this narrative, for, as a rule, the native troops belonging to these governments remained faithful to their salt; but in Bengal the case was widely different, and this difference arose chiefly from the peculiar constitution of the army in that portion of India. Into the composition of the latter the Brahmin caste entered largely—a sect whose scrupulous dread of defilement has been fully treated of earlier in this volume. According to the strict letter of his law no Brahmin can become a soldier, since the shedding of blood is rigorously forbidden, under penalty of loss of caste and other degradation most abhorrent to this semi-religious body. But, for the sake of the numerous advantages offered to the native who consented to become a servant of the Company, the Brahmin did not scruple to overcome many of his prejudices, even to wearing leather on his feet, and submitting to the control of the infidels, his officers. Taken as a body, the Brahmins are, physically, splendid men—erect, cleanly, and sober; for which virtues they found much favour in the eyes of commanding officers, who admitted into the ranks of their regiments a greater number of the priestly caste than was authorised by the rules of the service; the latter waving their prerogative for the time being, and enlisting as Kshatriyas or Rajpoots. In round numbers, it may be

said that about one-half of the thousand men composing a regiment in the Bengal army were members of the dominant caste, the remainder being made up of low-caste Hindoos, with a tolerable admixture of Mussulmans and Sikhs.

That this preponderance of the Brahmins over the other castes and religions was highly detrimental to the service



will, perhaps, be most readily shown by a quotation from Mr. Mead, who says—"Where they (the Brahmins) are really religious, their conscientious scruples interfere with the performance of half the duties which a soldier should perform; and where otherwise, their idleness and insolence make them even worse servants of the State. They must live and mess by themselves, no man of any inferior caste being allowed to come within a certain distance of their cooking-places, lest the wind should sweep the taint of his pollution across the food intended to nourish the stomachs of the twice-born. The strength of discipline is materially impaired by the reverence which the chief native commissioned officer entertains for the rawest recruit who may happen to be a member of the priestly class. The feeling in this respect is exactly analogous to that which most London tradesmen would entertain with regard to the son of a nobleman, whom poverty or eccentricity might compel to serve behind the counter. Whilst regiments belonging to the other Presidencies will cheerfully take spade and pickaxe, and work when occasion calls for their services, the Bengal Brahmin would rather submit to any inconvenience than contaminate his hands with the marks of labour. He is never more, but often less, than a fighting man, who has been pampered till, as was natural to an Asiatic under such circumstances, he lapsed into rebellion. Happily, he has now abolished himself, and his family traditions of pay and pension, enjoyed from father to son for generations, are brought to a close."

From the above pithy passage, written by a man who

was in Bengal during the outbreak, and who had for many years closely studied the complex native character, the reader will see what a powerful element for evil existed in every branch of the Bengal army; an element the more likely to blaze up into sedition and revolt, in that the regimental discipline was of the laxest nature, one half of the officers being constantly absent from their men, and the other half reduced to mere machines by the Government, in whose hands rested the advancement of each individual Sepoy, even the Divisional General being unable to raise a private, however deserving, to the rank of a non-commissioned officer.

It must not be supposed that the giant revolt I am attempting to describe was unprecedented. Several outbreaks had occurred amongst native troops, even in the present century, notably the 47th Bengal Native Infantry, which revolted at Barrackpore in 1824; but these risings, being merely local, were easily repressed, and were of insufficient consequence to be detailed at length.

From the above the reader will be enabled to form some idea of the constitution of the Indian army in 1857, and I now pass on to its strength. There were at that time, in the Company's employ, nearly 240,000 troops of all arms of the service, distributed throughout the three Presidencies, though more than half the number were in Bengal, viz., 118,000 natives and 22,000 Europeans. The latter, however, were widely scattered, some regiments being stationed in the north of the Punjaub, others in Burmah, whilst an immense tract of country was almost

destitute of European troops. A force from England was on its way to China, with which country we were then at war; and the Persian expedition, under Sir James Outram, numbering 14,000 men, was shortly expected at Bombay, having concluded a successful campaign against the forces of the Shah.

We now come to the first signs of disaffection amongst the native troops in Bengal. On the 22nd January, 1857, Captain Wright, of the 70th N.I., quartered at Dum-Dum, reported that there existed a very unpleasant feeling amongst the native soldiers regarding the grease used in the manufacture of the Enfield cartridges; and he continued—"The belief, in this respect, has been strengthened by the behaviour of a classie* attached to the magazine, who, I am told, asked a Sepoy of the 2nd Grenadiers to supply him with water from his lotah (or brass cooking vessel). The Sepoy refused, observing he was not aware of what caste the man was. The classie immediately rejoined, ' You will soon lose your caste, as ere long you will have to bite cartridges covered with the fat of pigs and cows,' or words to that effect. Some of the dépôt men, in conversing with me on the subject last night, said that the report had spread throughout India, and when they go to their homes their friends will refuse to eat with them." General Hearsey, in command at Dum-Dum, appreciated the gravity of this intelligence, and gave orders that the ammunition should be served out ungreased. the soldiers supplying their own fat from the bazaars.

* A non-combatant labourer.

But a firm impression had taken root amongst the troops, that the Government were designing some deep-laid scheme to destroy their caste, and convert them to Christianity, by fair means or foul. In the preceding year many villages had been visited by messengers, who appeared, nobody knew from where, sought out the head man, and handed to him two *chupatties*, or flat-baked cakes, enjoining him to make others of similar form, and forward them to the adjacent villages. This done, the mysterious envoys disappeared, and were never heard of again. That this singular means of communication signified something out of the common all agreed, yet none were found foresighted enough to scent the mischief even then brewing. In India news spreads with marvellous rapidity, and before many weeks the taunt with which the classie had replied to the high-caste Brahmin was discussed within every cantonment in Bengal. As may be imagined, malcontents were not wanting to fan the spark of discontent into the full blaze of mutiny. Every concession made by the Government was considered as part of the scheme of conversion. The mixture with which the cartridges were lubricated contained the fat of the cow, sacred in the eyes of the Hindoo, and of the hog, whose flesh was contamination to the Mussulman; thus the infidels could defile both sects at one fell swoop. Argument was useless; concession was in vain.

A sea-voyage to the Brahmin signifies nothing less than loss of caste, for he must either eat polluted food or starve. An order to proceed to Burmah caused the revolt of the

47th Regiment mentioned above, and in 1856 the Government had issued instructions that no recruit should be enrolled unless he consented to serve beyond the sea. This was regarded by the suspicious natives as proof positive that their religion was to be tampered with; one regiment, the 34th, actually refused to embark, and, strangest fact of all, escaped without punishment. That such leniency was both impolitic and culpable, the remainder of these pages will amply prove.

On the 19th of February, the 19th N.I. rose during the night at Berhampore, broke open the places in which the arms were kept, and were only induced to replace them by the presence of a small force of irregular cavalry and two guns. To punish this outbreak, Lord Canning, the Governor-General, resolved on disbanding the regiment, for which purpose they were ordered down to Barrackpore. At the latter place were some four thousand Sepoys, H.M.'s 53rd Regiment, and a European battery. That communications had passed between the native forces at Berhampore and those at Barrackpore was certain, and it seems probable that a simultaneous rising at both places was contemplated. Circumstances caused this plan to be frustrated, and the 19th were disbanded in presence of the assembled troops on the 30th March.

On the previous evening, a Sepoy of the 34th B.N.I., then at Barrackpore, had rushed on to the parade-ground with his rifle, shouting to his comrades for assistance, and had severely wounded both the adjutant and the sergeant-major, the native officer or *jemadar* in command of the

guard—a high-caste Brahmin—preventing his men from coming to their assistance. For this crime both the Sepoy and the jemadar were hung; and after an unaccountable delay of five weeks, the 34th—the regiment that had refused to embark for Burmah, and had been pardoned for the same—were disbanded, for the second time within thirteen years, on the 6th May, 1857.

We have thus seen insubordination on the part of the Bengal native army; but as yet the annals of the outbreak have remained free from the fearful stain of blood that glares out luridly from every page of the horrible record; and to that terrible time, which may be said to commence with the revolt at Meerut, I now pass on. I may here also mention that the mutiny extended over so large an area of ground, and the risings were so simultaneous, that any attempt to describe it chronologically would reduce a narrative to the wildest confusion, requiring the reader's mental presence at places hundreds of miles apart. I shall therefore follow up each main feature of the struggle separately, never attempting to unite them unless necessity absolutely compels me; by which means I hope to render this sketch clear and intelligible.



CHAPTER XVII.

Outbreak at Meerut—The Siege and Fall of Delhi.

EARLY in May, 1857, the 3rd Bengal Cavalry, quartered at Meerut, were tendered cartridges of a new form, in which the ends were to be torn off, instead of bitten by the teeth, as had hitherto been customary. Out of ninety troopers drawn up on parade, all but five refused to receive the ammunition. The recusants were promptly brought to a court-martial; eighty of their number being sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and the remaining five to a shorter term. On the 9th of May, the convicted soldiers were stripped of their accoutrements, fettered, and marched off to the gaol in presence of the assembled troops, consisting of the Carbineers, 60th Rifles, two batteries of artillery, and the 11th and 20th Regiments of Native Infantry. No attempt at a rescue was made in presence of so large a European force, though the prisoners gave vent to expressions of despair, and reproached the native regiments as the authors of their trouble. Everything passed off quietly until the evening of the following day,

Sunday, 10th May, when numbers of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry galloped off to the gaol, distant two miles, and liberated their comrades, who had been left under the charge of native troops alone. Other troopers of the same regiment rode wildly about, sabreing without mercy every officer or European that came in their way. They were soon joined by the released prisoners and the other two native regiments; and then a scene of incendiarism, cold-blooded murder, and pillage took place, even whilst the church bell was tolling for evening service. The houses of all the English residents were broken open, and their helpless inmates, men, women, and little children, massacred by the bloodthirsty demons, who finished their devilish work thoroughly by firing the buildings.

But what were the European troops doing all this time? will be the reader's first question; and to answer it I quote from Mr. Mead. "For two hours the work of butchery and burning continued, though the authorities had it in their power to have cut up within that time every living soul of the mutineers. Whether the apathy—which is more painful to contemplate than the scene of bloodshed—was the result of fear or imbecility, we have not the means of judging; and part of the vengeance invoked upon General Hewett (the officer in command) ought to fall on the heads of those who are responsible for the appointment of an old man of seventy years and upwards to such an important post. When the work of destruction had been completed, and every English man, woman, and child that they could lay hold of were murdered, the rebels prepared

to leave the station, and were allowed to do so without hindrance. They took the Delhi road, and went on their way rejoicing ; when at last the dragoons and rifles made their appearance, and shot down a few, without in any way impeding the march of the rest. Their place of refuge was forty miles distant, the highway was level as a bowling-green the whole way, and they had to cross two rivers to get into Delhi. A few guns placed on the road, a forced march of the Rifles, and smart gallop of the cavalry, would have placed the British force in a position to effect their total annihilation. The mischief at Meerut had been done ; the safety of the station was past praying for ; and what had 2000 of Her Majesty's choice troops to do but to plant themselves in the path of the bloodthirsty traitors and trample out the mutiny, so far at least as they were concerned ? But the chance—which many a gallant heart must have prayed for all that night in agony of spirit—was allowed to pass away, and the cowardice or folly of a single man has entailed the slaughter of countless thousands, and put to hazard the fairest dominion that ever the sun shone upon. There is no punishment great enough for such weakness, and we had better let it rest under the shield of ignominy and universal execration.”

The above sweeping censure was penned in the year 1857, before the mutiny was suppressed, and when men's minds were boiling with indignation. The lapse of time and the return of calmer feelings have found many excuses for the veteran general ; but that by one tithe of the vigour and promptitude afterwards so signally displayed by our

military chiefs, the mutineers could have been prevented from establishing themselves in Delhi, seems undoubted.

Throughout the night of the 10th the rebels marched resolutely onwards, and on the following morning, crossing the Jumna by a bridge of boats, they entered the city, signalising their advent by the slaughter of every European encountered on their path. Their first care was to make for the barracks of the native troops quartered in Delhi, who needed but little persuasion to join them, and showed themselves true disciples of the Meerut ruffians by at once pistolling every officer they could find. Their brethren



THE KING'S PALACE, DELHI.

seduced, the mutineers marched to the palace of the King—a helpless old man, drawing a pension from the Government. Though divested of all actual authority

without his palace, within it the King of Delhi was omnipotent. Some twelve thousand retainers looked upon his word as law, and he might, by a mere sign, have caused the gates to be closed and the mutineers to be excluded. The descendant of Aurungzebe took a course diametrically opposite, listened to the voice of the charmer who recalled visions of his ancestral greatness, and permitted himself to be placed at the head of the revolt.

Within the walls of Delhi were three native regiments, the 38th, 54th, and 74th infantry, and a battery of native artillery. Without any exception these men joined the mutineers, and conjointly they committed every known brutality. Mr. Frazer, the commissioner, was wounded by a pistol-shot within the palace, and staggered against the wall; a trooper severed his head at a single blow. Captain Douglas shared the same fate. Space compels me to compress all personal narrative within the smallest compass; but the defence of the magazine at Delhi by nine gallant men was so great a feat of arms, that I extract Lieutenant Forrest's despatch at length. Lieutenant Willoughby of the Bengal Artillery was in charge of the magazine, and what measures he took to prevent its falling into the enemy's hands the following account will show:—

“On Theophilus Metcalfe alighting from his buggy, Lieutenant Willoughby and I accompanied him to the small bastion on the river face, which commanded a full view of the bridge, from which we could distinctly see the mutineers marching in open column, headed by the cavalry; and the Delhi side of the bridge was already

in the possession of a body of cavalry. On Sir Theophilus Metcalfe observing this, he proceeded with Lieutenant Willoughby to see if the city gate was closed against the mutineers. However, this step was needless, as the mutineers were admitted directly to the palace, through which they passed cheering. On Lieutenant Willoughby's return to the magazine, the gates of the magazine were closed and barricaded, and every possible arrangement that could be made was at once commenced on. Inside the gate leading to the park were placed two 6-pounders, double-charged with grape—one under Acting Sub-Conductor Crow and Sergeant Stewart, with the lighted matches in their hands, and with orders that, if any attempt was made to force that gate, both guns were to be fired at once, and they were to fall back on that part of the magazine in which Lieutenant Willoughby and I were posted. The principal gate of the magazine was similarly defended by two guns, with the chevaux-de-frise laid down on the inside. For the further defence of this gate and the magazine in its vicinity there were two 6-pounders, so placed that either would command the gate and a small bastion in its vicinity. Within sixty yards of the gate, and in front of the office, and commanding two cross roads, were three 6-pounders and one 24-pounder howitzer, which could be so managed as to act upon any part of the magazine in that neighbourhood. After all these guns and howitzers had been placed in the several positions above named, they were loaded with double charges of grape. The next step taken was to place arms in the hands of the

native establishment, which they most reluctantly received, and appeared to be in a state, not only of excitement, but also of insubordination, as they refused to obey any orders issued by the Europeans, particularly the Mussulman portion of the establishment. After the above arrangements had been made, a train was laid by Conductors Buckley, Scully, and Sergeant Stewart, ready to be fired by a preconcerted signal, which was that of Conductor Buckley raising his hat from his head, on the order being given by Lieutenant Willoughby. The train was to be fired by Conductor Scully, but not until such time as the last round from the howitzers had been fired. So soon as the above arrangements had been made, guards from the palace came and demanded the possession of the magazine in the name of the King of Delhi, to which no reply was given.

"Immediately after this, the subadar of the guard on duty at the magazine informed Lieutenant Willoughby and me that the King of Delhi had sent down word to the mutineers that he would, without delay, send scaling-ladders from the palace, for the purpose of scaling the walls, and which shortly after arrived. On the ladders being erected against the wall, the whole of our native establishment deserted us by climbing up the sloped sheds on the inside of the magazine, and descending the ladders on the outside; after which the enemy appeared in great numbers on the top of the walls, and on whom we kept up an incessant fire of grape, every round of which told well, as long as a single round remained. Previous to the

natives deserting us, they hid the priming pouches ; and one man in particular, Kurreembuksh, a durwan, appeared to keep up a constant communication with the enemy on the outside, and kept them informed of our situation. Lieutenant Willoughby was so annoyed at this man's conduct that he gave me an order to shoot him, should he again approach the gate.

" Lieutenant Raynor, with the other Europeans, did everything that could possibly be done for the defence of the magazine ; and where all have behaved so bravely, it is almost impossible for me to point out any particular individual. However, I am in duty bound to bring to the notice of Government the gallantry of Conductors Buckley and Scully on this trying occasion. The former, assisted only by myself, loaded and fired in rapid succession the guns above detailed, firing at least four rounds from each gun, and with the same steadiness as if standing on parade, although the enemy were then some hundreds in number, and kept up a continual fire of musketry on us within forty or fifty yards. After firing the last round, Conductor Buckley received a musket-ball in his arm, above the elbow, which has since been extracted here. I, at the same time, was struck in the left hand by two musket-balls, which disabled me for the time. It was at this critical moment that Lieutenant Willoughby gave the order for firing the magazine, which was at once responded to by Conductor Scully firing the several trains. Indeed, from the very commencement, he evinced his gallantry by volunteering his services for blowing up the magazine,

and remained true to his trust to the last moment. As soon as the explosion took place, such as escaped from beneath the ruins—and none escaped unhurt—retreated through the sally-port on the river face. Lieutenant Willoughby and I succeeded in reaching the Cashmere Gate. What became of the other parties it is impossible for me to say. Lieutenant Raynor and Conductor Buckley have escaped to this station. Severe indisposition prevented my sending in this report sooner."

Within the Delhi arsenal were vast quantities of every warlike material, and their acquisition by the mutineers would have rendered them infinitely more powerful for harm; but by Willoughby's heroism a considerable portion was destroyed, and a great number of the rebels killed—how many will never be known. Poor Willoughby reached Meerut after some days, blackened by the explosion, and worn out by wounds, fatigue, and privation. All these causes combined had done their work too fatally, and, despite of every care that could be afforded him, he died soon afterwards.

Notice of the outbreak at Meerut was conveyed without delay to General Anson, the commander-in-chief, who was then at Simla. He at once ordered the concentration of his disposable forces at Umballa, and arrived there in person on the 15th May, resolving to push on to Delhi without delay, and lay siege to that city, now the very hotbed of mutiny, and the capital of the Sepoy king. But alas! the general's best intentions were frustrated by the absence of all the requisite supplies; neither siege-train nor means of

transport could be found at the moment they were so urgently needed. Still Anson lost no time in pushing onwards, and on the 17th of May the march to Delhi was commenced—a march into the details of which I cannot enter here. But the hand of death was already laid on the commander-in-chief, long ere his forces reached their destination ; he died of cholera at Kurnaul on the 27th of May, and the command devolved upon Major-General Sir Henry Barnard.

Under this officer the forces pushed on with all expedition towards the rebel stronghold, marching during the night to avoid the glaring sun, but losing many men from cholera. Sir Hope Grant in his journal says—"It was a singular species of illness. Those attacked by it had but little pain —only slight cramps—and then they flickered out like a wasted candle."

Before reaching Delhi, Barnard hoped to be joined by the troops from Meerut, who left that place on the 27th May, under the command of Brigadier Archdale Wilson. This force consisted of a wing of the 60th Rifles, two squadrons of the Carbineers, and some Artillery. They hoped to effect their junction with the main body of troops without molestation from the rebels ; but on the 30th May the latter opened fire on the column with some heavy guns they had planted on a ridge, and then ensued the battle of the Hindun, in which the mutineers were signally defeated, and driven back in disorder to Delhi. The attack was renewed on the following day, but with the same happy result ; and on the 1st of June, Wilson was reinforced by

five hundred Ghoorkas under Major Reid. By this time General Barnard's forces had reached Alipore, a place distant twelve miles from Delhi, and on the 7th of June the Meerut contingent joined the main body.

On the following day (June 8th) took place the battle of Budlee-ka-Serai, which resulted in a complete victory for the British, though at a cost of fifty-one officers and men killed, and one hundred and thirty-four wounded. Barnard followed up his success with vigour, and, despite the intense heat of the sun and the fatigue of the troops, a halt was not sounded until the mutineers had been swept back to the sheltering walls of their stronghold. Barnard now took up a position on the site of the old Sepoy cantonments, which had been burnt during the battle. The "Ridge," as it is now generally called, was a splendid position for all operations, both offensive and defensive, being within gunshot of Delhi, which, from its altitude, it overlooked.

From this date the siege may be said to commence, and I now subjoin the list of the British Forces, as given by Mr. Kaye. "These consisted of some three thousand Europeans and twenty-two guns, viz:—the 9th Lancers, two squadrons of Carbineers, six companies of the 60th Rifles, the 75th Foot, the 1st Bengal Fusiliers, six companies of the 2nd Bengal Fusiliers, sixteen Horse Artillery guns manned by Europeans, and the siege-train, which had arrived two days before the battle of Budlee-ka-Serai."

To attempt an assualt with such a mere handful of men, as compared to the overwhelming number of the rebels,

was deemed highly hazardous; and the history of the siege for many weeks consisted in a series of sorties by the insurgents, all of which were successfully repelled, though at great cost of life. On the 6th of July Sir Henry Barnard died of cholera, brought on, it is generally supposed, by a too severe mental strain, and General Reed assumed the command. This officer was, within a week, compelled by ill-health to return to the north, leaving the besieging force under the command of Brigadier-General Wilson, a most energetic and efficient leader.

Meanwhile reinforcements from all quarters had been coming in—some regiments, notably the Guides, making marches of extraordinary rapidity; and on the 4th of September the heavy siege-train arrived, consisting of sixty guns of different calibres. Breaching batteries were at once thrown up, the guns placed in position, and fire opened on the 13th September. By sundown two practicable breaches had been made, and the following day was fixed upon for the assault.

It took place, and Delhi fell. Into the particulars of this splendid deed of arms space will not permit me to enter; but the reader will have no difficulty in obtaining a detailed account, and he will then be enabled to form some estimate of the gallantry of the troops engaged. It needs but a few strokes of the pen to record the fall of the rebel stronghold; but, amidst our joy at the vengeance wreaked on the insurgents, we must not lose sight of the cost at which it was obtained. I am not thinking of the money spent over the reduction of the city, but of the valiant men

whose last resting-place is under the walls of Delhi. When the assault took place, our force amounted to nearly ten thousand men: of these the return gives us eleven



PESHAWUR GUIDE.

hundred and thirty-five killed and wounded, amongst the former being the gallant Brigadier Nicholson, who was mortally wounded whilst leading his men to the attack of

the Lahore Gate, and Lieutenant Salkeld, who affixed to the Cashmere Gate the petard by which it was blown open. What was the correct number of the rebels slain will never be known, but it must have been very considerable, for news of the atrocities at Cawnpore and elsewhere had reached our infuriated soldiery, who, without mercy, meted out to the ruffians the punishment they so richly merited. Notwithstanding the utmost efforts of our troops, thousands of the mutineers escaped into the surrounding country, and eventually swelled the rebel ranks in other districts.

Before leaving Delhi, I must make some mention of the capture of the Sepoy king and his sons by Hodson, an event which caused no little stir at the time. To lay this correctly before the reader, I venture to extract the following from the late Sir Hope Grant's journal, a recently published narrative of certain portions of the mutiny that will amply repay perusal. "A report was brought to us that the king and royal family had taken refuge in the Hummayoon's tomb, near the Kootub road, and about five miles from Delhi. Next morning, the 21st (September), Captain Hodson set off with a party in the hope of being able to effect his capture. He had only with him a few men of his own regiment, and it was necessary to act with the greatest caution. The native who had brought in the information was, I believe, one of the king's distant relations or followers, and, with true Eastern baseness, volunteered for his own ends to make the old man give himself up. Hodson had been told by General Wilson that he might promise him his life, but nothing more. The native

was directed to communicate this to the king, while Hodson himself rode into the courtyard with some half-dozen Sowars, leaving the remainder of his men a little distance off. Two or three thousand armed retainers had collected in the yard, a circumstance which looked anything but promising to his success. Hodson spoke the language uncommonly well, and with a commanding voice he ordered them to lay down their arms. They looked scowling and suspicious, but his confident manner and tone overawed them, and the greater part quietly obeyed. In course of time the native who had been sent to confer with the king returned, saying that upon the promise of his life being spared he would give himself up.

“Accordingly the Great Mogul, accompanied by his favourite begum (Zeenut Mehal) and a few servants, came out. They were put into several small bullock-carriages; and Hodson, with a coolness and courage which deserve the greatest admiration, threaded his way with them through the crowd of retainers, and trotted back to the town, where he lodged his prisoner safely in the palace.

“Having ascertained that three of the king’s descendants—one of them a grandson, Shah-Zada, or heir-apparent, and the other two younger sons—were still in the tombs, he again set off the next morning, hoping to effect their capture. Once more the native was sent in as an emissary, and, after much persuasion, the three princes, who were fearful villains, surrendered unconditionally. Hodson had waited outside the gate for two hours in great anxiety as to the success of his bold stroke, and expecting every

moment to be set upon by the lawless scoundrels who were prowling about. At length they drove out in one of the small bullock-gharries in which they had originally escaped from Delhi. Hodson lost no time, made his way with them as quickly as possible through the groups of natives, and never stopped until he got them to within a couple of miles of Delhi, where there was no one to interfere. Then he halted the carriage, made them get out, upbraided them with their shameful conduct towards our poor countrymen and countrywomen, and told them they must prepare to die. They tried to exculpate themselves from blame, and denied their guilt; but Hodson charged them with having killed the ladies and gentlemen who had taken refuge in the palace, or had been made prisoners; and, taking a revolver from his belt, with his own hand he shot the three unhappy wretches dead on the spot. This sad act was most uncalled for; for had they been tried by a commission, which would certainly have been the case, there is little doubt they would have been sentenced to death. War—and especially such a fearful war as we were waging—blunts the finer feelings of humanity, and prompts many to deeds which in cool blood the perpetrators would be the first to shudder at."

Bitter indeed were the feelings of our troops against the rebel Sepoys. For many weeks after the mutineers from Meerut had entered Delhi, the Europeans at that place and other adjacent stations saw miserable beings, worn with hunger and privations, crawl in by twos and threes, some only to die of the fatigue encountered on the road,

now that a haven of safety was reached. These wretched creatures had once been blooming women and gallant men. Each had their tale of horror to relate. One had seen her husband hacked to pieces in cold blood, another showed a long flaxen lock dabbled with blood—the life-blood of her youngest born. It is almost impossible, even now that eighteen years have passed away, for us in England to read these horrors without a passionate longing for vengeance; how, then, must the men have been affected who were eye-witnesses of scenes such as these? It is recorded of Her Majesty's 5th Fusiliers that, maddened by the recitals of the sufferings of their countrymen, each soldier scratched a cross upon his bayonet, and, kissing the mark, swore before his Maker to wash it out in the heart's blood of these human tigers. There is every reason to believe that this vow was fulfilled to the letter; and this incident alone will give some idea of the feeling amongst the troops.

With the capture of Delhi by the Europeans I bring this chapter, and one portion of this sketch, to a close. Many of the troops that had aided in its reduction could now be detached for the relief of other places, where women and children were still in danger, where the gallant men defending them were daily praying for succour. What places these were I shall endeavour to explain in the following chapter.



CHAPTER XVIII.

Calcutta, Benares, and Allahabad.

WHEN news of the Meerut outbreak reached Calcutta, the greatest anxiety was manifested by all classes—an anxiety that can hardly be wondered at when the defenceless state of the enormous commercial capital of the East is taken into consideration. A vague belief prevailed that the vast native population scattered throughout the suburbs—a rabble of the lowest order—would rise in revolt, release the criminals in the jails, loot the town (whose immense wealth could hardly fail to excite their cupidity), and re-enact the atrocities of Meerut and Delhi.

Lord Canning stood undaunted in face of the danger, though fully appreciating its magnitude. He remained, to outward appearance, perfectly calm; and Lady Canning drove out in an open carriage, as usual, at a time when many of the Europeans had secured passages for England, or had taken refuge on board the shipping in the river. The attitude assumed by the Governor-General caused many people to say that he underrated the peril; and when he declined an offer made by various public bodies,

such as the Trades' Association and the French and Americans residing in Calcutta, who wished to be enrolled as volunteers, great discontent prevailed, and it was openly said that the Government cared nothing for the safety of the capital.



BAZAAR IN CALCUTTA.

This was untrue; but Lord Canning had determined to exhibit no unmanly terror, and, aided by his advisers, was employing every means within his power to send European troops up country for the capture of Delhi, and the protection of the great cities in the Gangetic provinces. Messages

were despatched to Madras, Bombay, and Ceylon for every soldier that could be spared; Lord Elgin was urgently prayed to divert the troops destined for China to Calcutta; and steps were taken to forward Outram's force immediately on their return from Persia. Notwithstanding these politic and energetic measures, many people insisted that enough had not been done; and Mr. Mead says—

"There was still another means of saving the brave and helpless of Cawnpore and Lucknow, apart from the march of Europeans to their aid. At the outbreak of the mutiny, Jung Bahador, the virtual ruler of Nepaul, offered the use of his army, and the services of 3000 were accepted. The best men of the Nepaulese forces were picked out for the expedition; and the daring little Ghoorkas, elated to the highest pitch at the prospect of fighting by the side of the English, and plundering the hoards of the hated Sepoys, came down from their hills by forced marches, and expected to be in Oude about the 15th of June. Though the prime troops of Nepaul, they were the ugliest and dirtiest of warriors, not much amenable to discipline, nor fond of temperance in eating or drinking; but the Sikh, who cares nothing for Brahmin or Mussulman, shrinks with dismay from a conflict with the Ghoorka. They were a match in this case for more than 10,000 Sepoys; and had they been permitted to join Sir Henry Lawrence at Lucknow, he would have raised the siege in twenty-four hours after their arrival, and then, clearing a road to the Ganges, have crossed over to Cawnpore and liberated Sir Hugh Wheeler. But the blight of Calcutta was upon all concerned. When

the Ghoorkas had passed through the deadly jungle that surrounds the base of their hills, Jung Bahador received a despatch from Lord Canning, requesting that they might be recalled, as their services could be dispensed with. They went back to Khatmandu, heavy-hearted, and suffering greatly from sickness which broke out amongst them on their return march, but had scarce reached the capital when another despatch came from Lord Canning, asking Jung Bahador to send them back again to Oude, where they were now wanted. They left Khatmandu for the second time on the 29th of June, two days after the massacre at Cawnpore, and only arrived in the British territory, much reduced by disease and death, when Sir Henry Lawrence had been dead for a fortnight. There are widows and orphans who have more need to complain than Jung Bahador; but that chieftain considered that he had been ill-used in the matter; and writing to his friend Mr. Hodgson, late of the Bengal Civil Service, a narrative of the affair, he wound up with the exclamation, 'You see how I am treated. How do you expect to keep India with such rulers as these?'" This was undoubtedly a terrible blunder; but, judged as a whole, Lord Canning's conduct was noble, and his arrangements admirable.

In May, 1857, there was but one European regiment between Barrackpore and Agra, a line of country over seven hundred miles in length. Benares was without English troops; Allahabad was in a similar destitute condition; whilst a rising at both these important places was of the highest probability.

But on the 23rd of May arrived the first reinforcements, and with the right man at their head; the steamer containing the 1st Madras Fusiliers, under the command of Colonel Neill, made fast alongside the railway wharf at Calcutta, a splendid regiment nine hundred strong. The night train to Raneegunge, a place 120 miles distant, was on the point of starting when the Fusiliers arrived. The time was night; darkness was around; yet the railway officials showed no readiness to assist the new-comers; on the contrary, the station-master told the colonel that unless he could get his men ashore in two minutes the train should start without them; adding insolently, when Neill remonstrated, "You may command your regiment, but you are not colonel of this train." Neill's only reply was an order to place the speaker under arrest; the stokers, guard, &c., who came running up on his shouts for assistance, shared the same fate; a party of the Fusiliers took charge of the engine; and not until his men were within the carriages did Neill give the order for the terror-stricken officials' release. The train was ten minutes late, but the Madras colonel's determination saved Benares, as the sequel will show. The proceeding was a high-handed one doubtless, and on any other occasion might have lost an officer his commission; but the next day all Calcutta rang with it, and men's hearts beat high with hope on hearing of such vigour and determination.

Early in June more reinforcements arrived—first the 64th, then the 35th; later on, the 78th Highlanders, followed speedily by others. As fast as they poured in, the

troops were hurried up country, where their presence was so sorely needed. Every possible machinery—the rail as far as it went, then horse and bullock dawk—was put in motion to expedite the movements of the reliefs. But travelling was painfully slow. Benares could be reached in five days, but only some twenty-four men were able to avail themselves daily of the horse-dawk in which these rapid marches were performed. Thus the troops made their way northwards in driblets; but these small handfuls of Europeans had a deterrent effect upon the natives, by whom their numbers were doubtless much exaggerated.

Let us now turn to Benares, distant four hundred miles from Calcutta; that sacred city on the banks of the Ganges, which, with its mosques and temples, has been described in the main portion of this volume. At this enormous place were stationed three native regiments, the 37th N.I., the Loodianah Sikhs, and the 13th Irregular Cavalry; opposed to whom, should they rise in revolt, stood half a company of European artillery, commanded by Captain Olpherts, numbering about thirty men. On the 24th of May a reinforcement of forty-four men of the 84th Regiment arrived, and as these were the first troops that had been sent up country from the south, their advent was of immense importance to the anxious European residents, as showing that the Government were straining every nerve to forward them relief. When this handful of men arrived, the Benares authorities were treading on mined ground, for the feelings of both the native soldiery and of the vast population were deeply moved by the news from Meerut

and Delhi. Mutiny and sedition were only slumbering ; at any moment they might break out ; yet, with a courage and self-devotion beyond all praise, they forwarded the forty-four men to Cawnpore, notwithstanding that news had just reached them of the native regiment at Azimgurh, a place only sixty miles distant, being on the verge of mutiny. This alarming intelligence was shortly afterwards confirmed by the arrival of the officers of the rebel regiment, whom the Sepoys, in place of murdering, escorted a portion of the way towards Benares. Then it became evident that quiet in the latter place could not be maintained beyond a few hours ; but ere these had elapsed Colonel Neill arrived ; his detention of the train had enabled him to reach Benares at the very moment when a man of his stamp was most needed.

Mr. Kaye says—"And with this Madras colonel came the first assertion of English manhood that had come from the south to the rescue of our people in the Gangetic provinces. Leading the way to future conquests, he came to strike and to destroy. He was one of those who wisely thought, from the first, that to strike promptly and to strike vigorously would be to strike mercifully ; and he went to the work before him with a stern resolution not to spare. Both from the north and from the south at this time the first great waves of the tide of conquest were beginning to set in towards the centres of the threatened provinces. Canning from one end of the line of danger, and Lawrence from the other, were sending forth their succours, neither under-estimating the magnitude of the peril, but both

confident of the final result. It was the work of the latter to rescue Delhi, while the former was straining every effort to secure the safety of Benares, Allahabad, Agra, Cawnpore, Lucknow, and other lesser places depending upon them. And now assistance had really come to the first of these places. A detachment of Madras Fusiliers was at Benares, and the men of the 10th Foot, from Dinapore, whose arrival had been delayed by an accident, had also made their appearance."

It was on the 4th of June that Neill and a small number of his Fusiliers reached Benares. Brigadier Ponsonby was the senior officer of the 250 European troops now within the city. A consultation was held, for it had transpired that the 37th N.I. meditated a rising that night. Fiery Neill recommended immediate action, and the disarming of the suspected regiment. This bold step was determined upon, and the parade ordered for five o'clock of that very day. The troops assembled at the appointed hour, and Ponsonby, addressing the regiment, ordered them to lay down their arms. Two companies did so, and it was hoped that no resistance would be offered ; but some of the men who still retained their muskets commenced firing on the little body of British, and their companions speedily followed their example. Then Olpherts, in command of the artillery, opened upon the rebels with grape, and soon sent them reeling back to the shelter of their huts, from behind which they kept up a brisk fire, until round shot was added to the grape, when they broke and fled.

Meanwhile the Loodianah Sikhs, whose loyalty there

was no reason to suspect, had stood looking on ; but suddenly, as though moved by some unaccountable impulse, they poured a volley into the Europeans. Olpherts at once turned his guns upon them, and, having ascertained that their officers were out of the line of fire, opened with grape at less than a hundred yards. Three successive times the Punjaubees charged up to the very muzzles of the cannon ; but the gunners were Englishmen, and three times they were driven back by a strong iron hail that mowed them down by scores. They broke and fled. Benares was saved. That the Sikhs acted in this manner from a mistaken idea that their lives were in danger became afterwards apparent. Many of them returned and begged to be forgiven ; their excuses were accepted, and they ever afterwards showed themselves a loyal and reliable corps. On the 9th of June martial law was proclaimed by Government in the Allahabad and Benares districts, and the scattered mutineers were hunted down and shot or hung without mercy.

I pass over a minor rising which took place at Jaunpore, and now we come to Allahabad.

This city is situated at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, is distant seventy miles from Benares, and has a population of about 75,000, made up of Brahmins, Mussulmans, and religious mendicants. The town itself is described as unworthy of admiration, but the grand old fort, towering above it, forms a prominent and attractive feature in the landscape. Its strategical importance to the British at such an epoch was, in a military point of view, enormous, for it commanded the great water highways of

that part of India, and contained in addition a large arsenal, abounding with stores, guns, and munitions of war of every description. When, on the 12th of May, tidings of the Meerut outbreak reached Allahabad, there was not a single European soldier in the place, except the magazine staff. Of native troops there were the 6th N.I., a wing of the Ferozepore regiment of Sikhs, and a few days later two troops of Oude Irregular Cavalry arrived. The Government were in despair of finding Europeans to send to this important place, when it was remembered that there were some sixty invalid artillerymen at Chunar, distant sixty miles. These old soldiers—the youngest of them hardly less than fifty years of age—were hurried down to Allahabad and posted in the fort, then occupied by about six hundred men, five hundred of whom were Sikhs, the other hundred belonging to the 6th N.I. The remainder of the native troops were quartered at the cantonments, which stood between the rivers, two miles from the Fort.

On the 25th of May the 6th N.I., with effusive expressions of loyalty, demanded to be led against the Delhi mutineers. Their noble conduct was telegraphed to Lord Canning, who sent back a gracious message, which on the 6th of June was read aloud to the regiment, who received it with ringing cheers. When the parade was dismissed, the officers went back to their mess at the cantonments, filled with pride and delight at the fidelity of their men. Here at least was one gallant regiment untainted by disaffection. At nine o'clock that very evening, only a few hours after they had cheered the Governor-General's

message, the bugle sounded ominously through the lines and the “faithful” 6th, rising *en masse*, massacred seventeen of their officers, amongst them nine boy-ensigns only landed a few weeks from England. The colonel, Simpson, managed to gain the fort, followed by a trail of bullets, one of which grazed his helmet, and another wounded his charger; the poor brute had just strength to carry its rider within the walls, and then dropped down dead.

The main gate was guarded by some eighty Sepoys, who of course were burning to admit their rebel companions; but a couple of six-pounders were drawn up in front of them, manned by the gallant invalid veterans, who, standing with their port-fires alight, gave them so many minutes within which to lay down their arms. Overawed by the resolute bearing of the noble old soldiers, the ruffians scowlingly obeyed, and were expelled from the fort immediately.

The danger to those within the stronghold was now much reduced, let us therefore glance at what transpired without.

The whole population arose; the jails were opened, and the released prisoners rushed about the streets, the fetters still dangling from their limbs; every European or Eurasian encountered by the demons was butchered without mercy; the treasury was broken open and £300,000 plundered; and the country for miles around was the scene of pillage, rapine, bloodshed, and incendiaryism. The most horrible cruelties were perpetrated. An eye-witness relates that houses were burnt, their inmates chopped to pieces, some

roasted, children tossed aloft and caught upon bayonets, all cruelly tortured.

Some idea of the miserable city may be gathered from the following graphic account given by Mr. Mead:— “Every house belonging to the English residents was burnt or gutted, and property to an enormous amount destroyed. What the thieves and Sepoys left was looted by the Europeans and Sikhs, who apparently could distinguish no difference between friend and foe in this respect. The work of destruction was carried on with impunity under the very guns of the fort; and supplies that would have enabled General Havelock to reach Cawnpore a week earlier were utterly destroyed or scattered. There were 1600 siege bullocks belonging to the commissariat available on the 27th of May, and on the 20th of June the Military Secretary was obliged to write to the officer commanding at Benares to do his utmost to collect carriage for Havelock’s force; one hundred and fifty bullocks would be required, which must be taken off the road, where they were employed at that time in assisting the bullock train. The valuable go-downs of the India General Steam Navigation Company were thoroughly sacked; and costly furniture, of no value to the plunderers, was smashed to pieces for the mere love of mischief. These did for private what the enemy did for public property. Drunkenness was all but universal, and riot reigned supreme. The Sikhs, having no taste for champagne or wine in general, sold all they could lay hands on at prices varying from threepence to eighteen-

pence a bottle ; but the brandy they seized for regimental use. Whatever was unsuited to their appetite was parted with for the merest trifle ; but, except for edibles, there were no buyers, and the losses which had ruined many persons benefited none. The works of the railway were almost destroyed for many miles. The rebels tore up the rails, burnt the stations, and, fearing to approach the locomotives lest they should ‘go off’ and blow them up, they fired into them from a safe distance till the engines were battered to pieces. The ‘lightning dawk,’ as a work of magic and mischief, was especially the object of rage and hatred. This state of things lasted until the 11th of June, when Colonel Neill arrived from Benares with half the Madras Fusiliers, and all classes of men felt that a master had been placed over them. His first act was to adopt sanitary measures in the fort, where cholera was raging to that extent that fifty persons had died in a single day ; and the result was so successful as to enable him to dismiss from his mind the dread of a lengthened pestilence. A couple of hours were given for the restoration of plundered property, after which, persons found with any portion of such in their possession were to be incontinently hung.”

In no record that I know of is the good effect of one master mind to be more clearly traced than in the present instance. Allahabad is a pandemonium ; Neill appears upon the scene, and, as though by magic, order is re-established.

The day after the colonel’s arrival he assumed the offensive. Organising a body of volunteers, who were

accompanied by fifty Fusiliers, some Sikhs, and Irregular Cavalry, he marched them against a force of two thousand rebels, who, under the command of a fanatic styling himself the Mouljee, had thrown up strong earthworks and besieged the Europeans in the fort. The sortie was completely successful, the Mouljee's horde were routed, and the whole quarter in which his dangerous ruffians had hitherto taken shelter was committed to the flames. As reinforcements arrived, and Neill's hands were strengthened, he inflicted a fearful lesson on the rebels. By cord or steel they were put to death in hundreds, every tree bore its ghastly burden, and it is stated that for three months eight dead-carts daily went their rounds from sunrise to sunset to take down the corpses that hung at the cross-roads and market-places. Under such an iron pressure order was not long in being restored.

Quitting Allahabad I now pass on to Cawnpore, a city whose name is perhaps now more familiar to Englishmen than any other in India—a notoriety not attributable to any merit of its own, but solely owing to the bloody tragedy which I now proceed to relate.



CHAPTER XIX.

Cawnpore—Nana Sahib.

CAWNPORE, a city containing 60,000 inhabitants, and distant nearly seven hundred miles from Calcutta, is situated on the right bank of the Ganges, in that large tract of country that lies between that river and the Jumna commonly called the Doab, and, except as regards the manufacture of articles in leather, is of small commercial importance. The cantonments and station were, at the time of the mutiny, remarkably straggling, covering no less a space of ground than six miles. The Divisional-General, Sir Hugh Wheeler, a veteran officer of over fifty years' service, resided there with his staff, and the native force under his command consisted of the 2nd Regiment of Cavalry, and the 1st, 53d, and 56th N.I., about 3000 men in all; but there were no European troops, with the exception of sixty artillerymen, the same number of H.M. 84th Regiment, and a few Madras Fusiliers. The supply of ammunition in store was very large, the treasury rich, and the European population unusually numerous; for, owing to the annexation of Oude, the English regiment that had



NANA SAHIB.

hitherto been stationed at Cawnpore had gone to Lucknow, but had left at the divisional head-quarters all its women and children—a circumstance that considerably increased the number of victims to the treachery of the human fiend, Nana Sahib.

But before proceeding further I must state in what relation this man stood to the British.

Nana Sahib was the titular name of Dhoondoo Pant, the adopted son of the last Peishwa of the Mahrattas. As has been shown earlier in this volume, adoption is the usual resort of a childless native, and a child thus acknowledged is regarded as possessing all the rights that would belong to an heir born in wedlock. When his adopted father, who dwelt at Bithoor, died in 1851, the Nana inherited all his enormous wealth, computed at over four millions sterling. But he came in contact with the East India Company regarding a *jaghire*, or estate, near Cawnpore, of which he asserted himself the rightful owner; his claim was not admitted by the Company, against whom he consequently nourished a concealed but deadly hatred. He nevertheless professed the utmost good-feeling for the English, and frequently entertained them at his palace, which was filled with European furniture, sporting pictures, and other knick-knacks. He had travelled more than most natives, having visited both Calcutta and London in furtherance of his lawsuit against the Company, and thus proved a very agreeable host, discussing many congenial subjects with his English guests, who little dreamt of the tiger heart underlying that smooth exterior.

Seeing that great excitement prevailed amongst the native soldiery, and apprehensive of an outbreak, Sir Hugh Wheeler resolved upon the construction of a defensive position, and selected for this purpose a plot of ground some two hundred yards square, a mile and a-half distant from the Ganges, within which stood two barrack hospitals—one built entirely of masonry, the other with a thatched roof—a few smaller buildings, and a well. Around this place earthworks were thrown up, embrasures constructed, and eight pieces of artillery planted, while all available provisions were collected and stored within. By great exertion enough supplies were got together to last a thousand persons for a month.

I have already mentioned that a large sum of money was in the treasury, a building situated near Nawab-gunj, at some miles' distance from the entrenchment. To get this coin within the earthwork was of great importance, for it would then cease to excite the cupidity of the natives; but when an attempt was made to remove it, the Sepoy guard were highly indignant at the implied doubt of their loyalty. Unwilling to precipitate matters by harsh measures, Sir Hugh Wheeler had recourse to the Nana for assistance. That wily traitor, nothing loath, sent two hundred of his armed retainers and a couple of guns to guard the treasury.

For some days no overt signs of insurrection appeared, and the old general even hoped that the danger would blow over; but on the night of the 4th of June the 2nd Cavalry rose, fired the buildings within their reach, and

galloped off to Newab-gunj on a truly congenial mission—the looting of the treasury. They were speedily joined by the 1st N.I., both regiments fraternised with the troops of the Nana, the usual jail delivery took place, and the flames of burning houses gave notice to the British in their entrenchment that the long-expected outbreak had at length taken place. Until the following morning (5th June) the 53rd and 56th N.I. remained quiet, but, tempted by emissaries from the cavalry, and doubtless fearful of losing their share of the plunder, they revolted and marched to Newab-gunj, where the whole of the insurgent regiments placed themselves under the command of the Nana, who had constituted himself head of the rebellion. The villainous Brahmin had at length thought fit to throw off the mask; henceforth we shall see him in his natural colours.

The intention of the mutineers, after looting the treasury, was to march direct to Delhi and place themselves at the disposal of the Sepoy king; but such a proceeding was directly opposed to the designs of the Nana, who, were the English driven out of India, hoped to place himself at the head of the great Mahratta nation. By artifice and specious promises he induced the rebels to turn back when they had even arrived at Kullianpore, one march on the road to Delhi, and at his instigation they proceeded to besiege the English in their miserable entrenchment—for miserably insufficient it was, with a loose embankment only four feet high, and rough embrasures that offered little or no protection to the gunners.

At noon on June the 6th the attack was commenced by a nine-pounder shot dropping within the enclosure, and soon the fire waxed rapid and deadly, the shrieks of the women and children forming a heart-rending accompaniment to the deep roar of the cannon.

Mr. Kaye says—"Then commenced a siege, the miseries of which to the besieged have never been exceeded in the history of the world. All the wonted terrors of a multitudinous enemy without, of a feeble garrison and scant shelter within, of the burden of women and children and sick people, with little to appease their wants or to allay their sufferings, were aggravated by the burning heat of the climate. The June sky was little less than a great canopy of fire; the summer breeze was as the blast of a furnace. To touch the barrel of a gun was to recoil as from red-hot iron. It was the season when European strength and energy are ever at their lowest point of depression—when military duty in its mildest form taxes the powers of Englishmen to the utmost, and English-women can do little more than sustain life in a state of languid repose in shaded apartments, with all appliances at hand to moderate the temperature and to mitigate the suffering. But now, even under the fierce meridian sun, this little band of English fighting men were ever straining to sustain the strenuous activity of constant battle against fearful odds; whilst delicate women and fragile children were suddenly called to endure disconforts and privations, with all the superadded miseries peculiar to the country and the climate, which it would have been hard to baffle

with in strong health under their native skies. The morning and evening baths, the frequent changes of raiment, the constant ministrations of assiduous servants in the smallest things, which are the necessities of English life in India, were now suddenly lost to these helpless ones, and, to intensify the wretchedness, the privacy and seclusion so dear to them became only remembrances of the past. Even amidst the roar of the cannon and the rattle of the musketry, with death around them in many ghastly shapes, the loss of these privileges was amongst the heaviest of their trials, for it violated all the decencies and proprieties of life, and shocked the modesty of their womanly natures."

From the 6th until the 27th of June this terrible siege continued, and words seem almost insufficient to record the sufferings endured by our poor people, or the heroic manner in which they were met. All were alike; military, civilians, women—ay, even children shrank from no fatigue or danger; from the general to the drummer-boy, from the high official to the simple clerk, all did their duty manfully and well. Many a heart in England may have swollen nigh unto breaking at the thought of all that their beloved ones underwent before death mercifully laid them at rest, but never has the blush of shame been raised to the cheeks of the sorrowers by ought unworthy on the part of those nine hundred beleaguered English, barely one-third of whom were combatants.

" Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well."

To mention all who behaved as became our countrymen would be to give a list in full of those within the entrenchment.

Listen to what Mr. Kaye—from whose magnificent history I venture to quote once more—says of the womanly endurance displayed in this fearful siege:—“And never since war began—never ‘in the brave days of old,’ of which poets delight to sing, when women turned their hair into bowstrings—has the world seen nobler patience and fortitude than clothed the lives and shone forth in the deaths of the wives and daughters of the fighting men of Cawnpore. No bowstrings were used in this defence; our arrows were of another kind. They went forth from the roaring mouths of our guns in the shape of round shot and grape and canister. But when these missiles fell short, or, by reason of the damage done to our pieces by the heavy artillery of the enemy, could not be used in the form from which they were issued from the expense-magazine, the gentlewomen of Cawnpore gave up perhaps the most cherished components of their feminine attire to improvise the ordnance most needed. It would take long to tell in detail all the stories of womanly self-devotion and patient endurance and calm courage waiting for the end. Among these heroines was Mrs. Moore, the true-hearted wife of the leader of the garrison. All the officers who fought under him had for her a tenderness equal to his own, and they ‘fitted up for her a little hut made of bamboo and covered with canvas,’ where ‘she would sit for hours, bravely bearing the absence

of her husband while he was gone on some perilous enterprise.' Many others, perhaps, suffered more. The pangs of childbirth came upon some in the midst of all this drear discomfort and painful publicity. Some saw their children slowly die in their arms ; some had them swept away from their breasts by the desolating fire of the enemy. There was no misery which humanity could endure that did not fall heavily upon our Englishwomen. It was the lot of many only to suffer. But those who were not prostrate, or in close attendance upon their nearest and dearest, moved about as sisters of charity, and were active in their ministrations. Nor was there wanting altogether the stalwart courage of the Amazon. It is related that the wife of a private of the 32nd, named Bridget Widdowson, stood sentry, sword in hand, for some time over a batch of prisoners tied together by a rope, and that the captives did not escape until the feminine guard had been relieved by one of the other sex."

And day by day the little garrison diminished, struck down by the insurgents' shot or the fierce rays of the sun. Water was scarce, and could only be obtained from the well at the risk of life. The air was tainted by the foul gases from the carcases of horses and oxen ; the bodies of the slain were thrown into a dry well to avoid contagion. On the 13th of June the rebels commenced firing red-hot shot ; the thatched roof of one of the hospitals became ignited, and some wounded men perished in the flames.

And what was the Nana, the friend of the English, about during these three weeks ? He was amusing himself in a

manner dear to his hellish spirit. His favourite diversion was the despatch of armed parties in search of European prisoners, who were put to death in his presence, and over whose sufferings he gloated. Sometimes he decorated his victims with a necklace—not composed of rare gems, but of their own severed noses and ears strung upon a cord and suspended on their blood-stained bosoms. This he regarded as a minor punishment. And fortune seemed to favour this miscreant, for his retainers captured a boat containing over a hundred fugitives from Futtyghur, which station had followed the example of Cawnpore. The women and children were kept prisoners for the present, the men slain in the Nana's presence. And how? Not shot or sabred outright; that would have afforded but little gratification to this epicure in cruelty; his palate craved a more highly-seasoned dish of horror. The hands of the victims were tied behind their backs; they were placed in a line, and a long bamboo passed through the arms behind their backs. Then the Nana's amusement commenced. His troopers rode up and down the length of the captives, loading them with abuse and insult. Suddenly a native, having selected a victim, halted, and putting his pistol to the helpless man's face blew out his brains, scattering the blood over the other prisoners; and so, slowly and protractedly, the bloody work went on until all were despatched, the dead bodies being retained in an upright position by their living companions. Is the revenge taken by our soldiery to be wondered at?

And meanwhile the siege continued. Mr. Trevelyan

says—"By day and night the fire never ceased, the round shot crashed and spun through the windows, raked the earthwork, and skipped about the open ground in every corner of our position. The bullets cut the air and pattered on the wall like hail. The great shells rolled hissing along the floors and down the trenches, and, bursting, spread around them a circle of wreck and mutilation and promiscuous destruction. In their blind and merciless career those iron messengers spared neither old nor young, nor combatants, nor sufferers, but flew ever onwards, inflicting superfluous wounds and unavailing destruction. A single bomb killed and maimed seven married women who were seated in the ditch. . . . Colonel Williams died of apoplexy, and his wife, disfigured and tortured by a frightful hurt in the face, would fain have rejoined her husband. On the 15th of June, Miss Mary Williams was stunned by a fall of the ceiling, and expired in the arms of a wounded sister, unconscious of her loving care. Two daughters survived for a while. Mrs. White was walking with a twin child at either shoulder, and her goodman, a private of the 32nd, at her side; the same ball slew the father, broke both elbows of the mother, and severely injured one of the orphans. Captain Reynolds lost an arm and his life by a cannon shot, and Mrs. Reynolds, whose wrist had been pierced by a musket ball, sank under fever and sorrow. A half-caste tradesman and his daughter, crouching behind an empty barrel, too late and together discovered that their shelter was inadequate. A son of Sir Hugh was reclining on a sofa, faint with

recent loss of blood—one sister at his feet, and another, with both his parents, busied about his wants in different parts of the room—when an uninvited and a fatal guest entered the doorway and left the lad a headless corpse. No less than three subalterns attached to the same regiment as young Wheeler lost their heads within the redan. Lieutenant Jervis, of the Engineers, was walking to his battery through a shower of lead, with a gait of calm grandeur, as if he were pacing the Eden Garden beneath the eye-glasses of Calcutta beauty. In vain his comrades raised their wonted shout of ‘Run, Jervis, run!’ He never returned to quarters—he never reached his post. A grape-shot passed through the body of Mr. Heberden as he was handing some water to a lady. This gentleman, the most undaunted and unaffected of the brave and simple men of science employed upon the East Indian Railroad, lay on his face for a whole week without a murmur or a sigh, but not, we may well believe, without a tacit prayer for the relief which came at last. Mr. Hillersden, the magistrate of the station, was dashed in pieces by a twenty-four pound ball while talking in the verandah to his wife, weak from an unseasonable confinement. A few days elasped, and a shot, less cruel than some, displaced an avalanche of bricks, which put an end to her short widowhood. But poverty of language does not permit to continue the list of horrors. In such a catalogue the synonyms of death are soon exhausted, and give place to a grim tautology.”

On the twenty-first day of the siege a female form was

seen approaching the entrenchment. Mowbray Thomson struck up the barrel levelled at the supposed spy, and the bullet whizzed harmlessly past her. She drew nearer, a wretched, half-clothed, squalid creature, with a little infant hanging at her breast. She was lifted over the barricade in a fainting condition, and was then recognised as Mrs. Greenway, the wife of a Cawnpore merchant. The poor lady had been despatched by the Nana with a letter to the besieged, the tenor of which was as follows:—

“All those who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad.”

Brave Sir Hugh would not at first listen to the terms offered, but the numbers of the little garrison were now reduced by half; the rainy season was at hand, when the battered earthworks would be washed away by the tropical downpour; the provisions were well nigh exhausted; the women and children were shelterless and uncared for. What could be done more? Nothing. All that gallant Englishmen could dare and endure they had gone through. Nought now remained. The terms were accepted. The little band were to deliver up the shattered entrenchment, and to be allowed free exit under arms, with sixty rounds of ammunition per man; carriage was to be provided for the conveyance of the women, children, and wounded; and boats in sufficient number, and stored with flour, were to be at the ghaut, or landing-place, to transport the Europeans to Allahabad.

On the morning of the 27th June the embarkation took

place, and as there were only two survivors of the tragedy that follows, I have no hesitation in quoting at length from the published record of one of them, Captain Mowbray Thomson, of the Bengal army. He says—“Never, surely, was there such an emaciated, ghostly party of human beings as we. There were women who had been beautiful, now stripped of every personal charm, some with, some without gowns; fragments of finery were made available no longer for decoration but decorum; officers in tarnished uniforms, rent and wretched, and with nondescript mixtures of apparel more or less insufficient in all. There were few shoes, fewer stockings, and scarcely any shirts; these had all gone for bandages for the wounded. After an hour or two of this busy traffic the elephants and palanquins made their appearance at Ashe’s battery. Water was the only cordial we could give to the wounded, but this they eagerly and copiously drank. No rations were served out before starting, nor was any ceremony or religious service of any kind observed. Sixteen elephants and between seventy and eighty palanquins composed the van of the mournful procession, and more than two hundred sufferers had thus to be conveyed down to the river. . . . Poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler, his lady and daughter, walked down to the boats. The rear was brought up by Major Vibart, who was the last officer in the entrenchment. Some of the rebels who had served in this officer’s regiment insisted on carrying out the property which belonged to him; they loaded a bullock-cart with boxes, and escorted the major’s wife and family down to

the boats with the most profuse demonstrations of respect. When we reached the place of embarkation, all of us, men and women, as well as the bearers of the wounded and children, had to wade knee-deep through the water to get into the boats, as not a single plank was provided to serve as a gangway. It was 9 o'clock a.m. when the last boat received her complement. And now I have to attempt to portray one of the most brutal massacres that the history of the human race has recorded, aggravated as it was by the most reckless cruelty and monstrous cowardice.

"The boats were about thirty feet long and twelve feet across the thwarts, and overcrowded with their freight. They were flat down on the sandbanks, with about two feet of water rippling around them. We might and ought to have demanded an embarkation in deeper water, but in the hurry of our departure this had been overlooked. If the rainy season had come on while we were entrenched, our mud-walls would have been entirely washed away, and grievous epidemic sickness must have been added to the long catalogue of our calamities. While the siege lasted, we were daily dreading the approach of the rains ; now, alas ! we mourned their absence, for the Ganges was at its lowest. Captain Moore had told us that no attempt at anything like order of progress would be made in the departure ; but when all were aboard, we were to push off as quickly as possible and make for the other side of the river, where orders would be given for our further direction. As soon as Major Vibart had stepped into his boat, 'Off' was the word ; but at a signal from the shore the

native boatmen, who numbered eight and a coxswain to each boat, all jumped over and waded to the shore. We fired into them immediately, but the majority of them escaped, and are now plying their old trade in the neighbourhood of Cawnpore. Before they quitted us, these men had contrived to secrete burning charcoal in the thatch of most of the boats. Simultaneously with the departure of the boatmen, the identical troopers who had escorted Major Vibart to the ghaut opened upon us with their carbines. As well as the confusion caused by the burning of the boats would allow, we returned the fire of these horsemen, who were about fifteen or sixteen in number, but they retired immediately after the volley they had given us.

“Those of us who were not disabled by wounds now jumped out of the boats and endeavoured to push them afloat, but, alas! most of them were utterly immovable. Now from ambush, in which they were concealed all along the banks, it seemed that thousands of men fired upon us; besides four nine pounders, carefully masked and pointed to the boats, every bush was filled with Sepoys.

“There are two or three houses close down by the river in this place, one of them formerly known as the Fusilier mess-house, a second the residence of Captain Jenkins, and a third now in the occupancy of the station chaplain; these were filled with our murderers, and the last of them held two of the guns. The scene which followed this manifestation of the infernal treachery of our assassins is one that beggars all description. Some of the boats

presented a broadside to the guns, others were raked from stem to stern by the shot. Volumes of smoke from the thatch somewhat veiled the full extent of the horrors of that morning. All who could move were speedily expelled from the boats by the heat of the flames. Alas! the wounded were burnt to death ; one mitigation only there was to their horrible fate—the flames were terrifically fierce, and their intense sufferings were not protracted. Wretched multitudes of women and children crouched behind the boats, or waded out into deeper water, and stood up to their chins in the river to lessen the probability of being shot. Meanwhile Major Vibart's boat, being of lighter draught than some, had got off and was drifting down the stream, her thatched roof unburnt. I threw into the Ganges my father's Ghuznee medal and my mother's portrait, all the property I had left, determined that they should only have my life for a prey ; and with one final shudder at the devilry enacting upon that bank, and which it was impossible to mitigate by remaining any longer in its reach, I struck out, swimming for the retreating boat. There were a dozen of us beating the water for life ; close by my side were two brothers, Ensign Henderson (56th N.I.) and his brother, who had but recently come out to India. They both swam well for some distance, when the younger became weak, and, although we encouraged him to the utmost, he went down in our sight, though not within our reach. Presently his survivor, J. W. Henderson, was struck on the hand by a grape-shot ; he put the disabled arm over my shoulder,

and with one arm each we swam to the boat, which by this time had stranded on a bank close to the Oude side of the river. We were terribly exhausted when Captain Whiting pulled us in, and had it not been for the sandbank we must have perished. All the other swimmers sank through exhaustion or were shot in the water, except Lieutenant Harrison, of the 2nd Light Cavalry, and Private Murphy, 84th Regiment. Harrison had left one of the boats in company with a number of passengers, and by wading they reached a small island about two hundred yards from the shore. While I was swimming past this islet I saw three sowars of cavalry who had also waded from the Cawnpore bank; one of them cut down one of our women with his tulwar, and then made off for Harrison, who received him with a charge from his revolver, and waited for the second man, whom he despatched in like manner, whereupon the third took to the water on the shore side of the ait, and Harrison, plunging in on the river-side, swam to Vibart's boat. While I was swimming, a second boat got away from the ghaut, and, while drifting, was struck by a round shot below the watermark, and was rapidly filling when she came alongside, and we took off the survivors of her party. Now the crowded state of our poor ark left little room for working her. Her rudder was shot away; we had no oars, for these had all been thrown overboard by the traitorous boatmen, and the only implements that could be brought into use were a spar or two, and such pieces of wood as we could in safety tear away from her sides. Grape and

round shot flew about us from either bank of the river, and shells burst constantly on the sandbanks in our neighbourhood. Alternately stranding and drifting, we were often within a hundred yards of the guns on the Oude side of the river, and saw them load, prime, and fire into our midst. Shortly after midday we got out of range of their great guns ; the sandy bed on the river bank had disabled their artillery bullocks, but they chased us the whole day, firing in volleys of musketry incessantly.

"On the 27th of June we lost, after the escape of the boat, Captain Moore, Lieutenants Ashe, Bolton, Burney, and Glanville, besides many others whose names I did not know. Captain Moore was killed while attempting to push off the boat—a ball pierced him in the region of the heart ; Ashe and Bolton died in the same manner ; Burney and Glanville were carried off by one round shot, which also shattered Lieutenant Fagan's leg to such an extent that, from the knee downwards, it was only held together by sinews ; his sufferings were frightful, but he behaved with wonderful patience. I had a great regard for him, as he and I were griffs together at Benares. Just after I had been pulled into the boat, Mrs. Swinton, who was a relative of Lieutenant Jervis of the Engineers, was standing up in the stern, and having been struck by a round shot, fell overboard and sank immediately ; her poor little boy, six years old, came up to me and said, 'Mamma has fallen overboard.' I endeavoured to comfort him, and told him mamma would not suffer any more pain. The little babe cried out, 'Oh, why are they firing upon us ? did not they

promise to leave off ?' I never saw the child after that, and suspect that he soon shared his mother's death.

"The horrors of the lingering hours of that day seemed as if they would never cease ; we had no food in the boat, and had taken nothing before starting. The water of the Ganges was all that passed our lips, save prayers and shrieks and groans.

"The wounded and the dead were often entangled together in the bottom of the boat : to extricate the corpses was a work of extreme difficulty, though imperatively necessary from the dreaded consequences of the intense heat, and the importance of lightening the boat as much as possible.

"In the afternoon of that day I saw a Sepoy from behind a tree deliberately taking aim at me : the bullet struck the side of my head, and I fell into the boat stunned by the wound. 'We were just going to throw you overboard,' was the greeting I had from some of the men when I revived. Six miles was the entire distance that we accomplished in the whole day ; at 5 p.m. we stranded, and as all our efforts to move the keel an inch were in vain, we resolved to stay there at all hazards till nightfall, in the hope that, when darkness sheltered us, we might be able to get out the women and lighten the craft sufficiently to push her off. They now sent a burning boat down the stream, in the hope that she would fall foul of us ; providentially the thing glided past us, though within a yard or two.

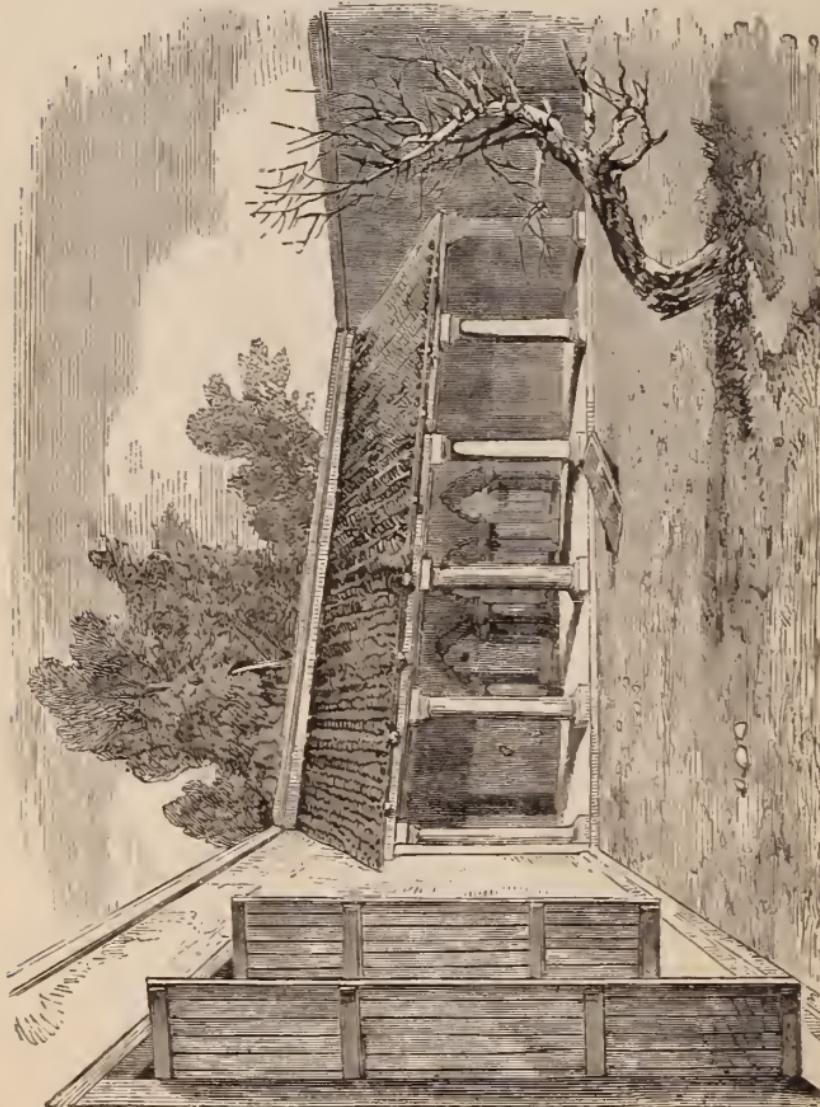
"At night they let fly arrows with lighted charcoal

fastened to them, to ignite, if possible, the thatched roof, and this protection we were in consequence obliged to dislodge and throw overboard. When we did succeed in getting adrift, the work of pushing away from the sand-banks was incessant, and we spent as much of the night out as we did in the boat. There was no moon, however, and although they did not cease firing at us until after midnight, they did us little damage."

All the next day the boat drifted slowly down the river, its wretched occupants exposed to an incessant fire of musketry from the banks, by which many of their number were killed or wounded. At sunset a barge full of armed men was observed sweeping down the river, its evident mission being the destruction of the fugitives, but it grounded on a sandbank, and twenty of the gallant Englishmen, assuming the offensive, charged, and, says Mowbray Thomson, grimly, "few of their number escaped to tell the story." Shortly afterwards the boat grounded, and the weary people fell asleep, but even whilst they slumbered heavily the gates of heaven were opened, the rain poured down in torrents, and the boat floated; but morning showed that they had drifted out of the main channel into a siding, where they soon settled down on a sandbank, exposed to a galling fire from the rebels.

At 9 a.m., Lieutenants Thomson and Delafosse, Serjeant Grady, and eleven privates, charged the Sepoys—a forlorn hope indeed, but nobly executed. Dispersing the foe, and faint under many additional wounds, the little party attempted to regain the boat—it was gone, neither it nor

its doomed occupants were ever seen by the survivors again. It afterwards transpired that all the men were massacred, and the women and children carried back to Cawnpore to present captivity and future death.



SCENE OF MASSACRE, CAWNPORE.

I must reluctantly forego following the fortunes of Thomson and his companions. All perished save four; these fell into the hands of a friendly Rajah, and ultimately rejoined the British forces.

Meanwhile the Nana had attained the summit of his ambition. He had been recognised by his host of miscreants as Peishwa of the Mahrattas, and had listened joyfully to the salute of twenty-one guns that thundered forth in honour of his accession. Furthermore, he had over two hundred helpless women and children as hostages, shut up in a little building called the Beebeegur—better known in England as the “House of Massacre.” Amongst these unfortunates were the fugitives from Futtyghur, of whom mention was made a few pages back.

But I must now briefly advert to certain events which had transpired at Allahabad, where we left the gallant Neill restoring order and straining every nerve to relieve Cawnpore. On the last day of June arrived General Havelock, who assumed the command, and on the 7th of July sallied forth with his force of under two thousand men. For several days the troops pressed onward to the rescue of their brethren, who, alas! were already beyond its aid. On the 12th of June a battle was fought at Futtehpore, in which the rebels were signally defeated, and, pushing on under the burning Indian sun, Havelock and his men again engaged the enemy twice on the 15th of June, first at Aony and again at the bridge over the Pandoo Nuddee, only eight miles from the goal they were striving to attain—Cawnpore

Over all these brilliant actions I pass lightly, and now return to our unhappy countrywomen in the power of the tiger of Bithoor.

Late in the afternoon of the 15th of June news reached the Nana that the British had carried the bridge over the Pandoo Nuddee, and were pressing onwards towards his capital. The avengers were at his gate ; his blood-stained diadem would shortly be torn from his brow ; hope died out in the breast of the new Peishwa. Only certain ignominy, and probably a felon's death, lay before the traitorous villain. But hold ! He had captives ; only women and children certainly, but their death would gratify his revengeful feelings and remove all unpleasant witnesses. The order went forth—the prisoners were doomed to slaughter.

Penned up in one wretched building, the hapless victims had for eighteen days been subjected to every insult and degradation that the depraved mind of the despot could suggest. Only one misery were our women exempted from—dishonour, as we accept the term, never befel them ; overtures were made to many to induce them to enter the tyrant's harem, but they were by all promptly and scornfully rejected.

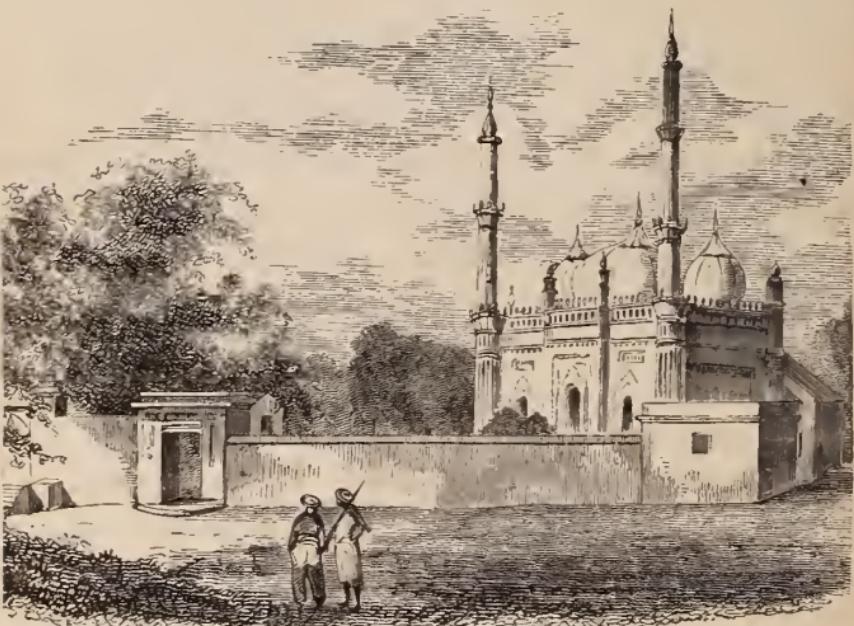
Many erroneous accounts of the fearful scene that transpired in the Beebeegur have been given to the public. The real truth—as far as it will ever be known—has been most carefully collected and set forth by Mr. Trevelyan in his touching volume, *Cawnpore*, from which I venture to extract the following :—

"About half-an-hour after this the woman called 'the Begum' informed the captives that the Peishwa had determined to have them killed. One of the ladies went up to the native officer who commanded the guard and told him that she learnt they were all to die. To this he replied that, if such were the case, he must have heard something about it, so that she had no cause to be afraid; and a soldier said to the Begum, 'Your orders will not be obeyed. Who are you that you should give orders?' Upon this the woman fired up, and hurried off to lay the affair before the Nana. During her absence the Sepoys discussed the matter, and resolved that they would never lift their weapons against the prisoners. One of them afterwards confessed to a friend that his own motive for so deciding was anxiety to stand well with the Sahibs if ever they got back to Cawnpore. The Begum presently returned with five men, each carrying a sabre: two were Hindoo peasants, the one thirty-five years of age, fair and tall, with long mustachios, but flat-faced and wall-eyed; the other considerably his senior, short, and of a sallow complexion. Two were butchers by calling, portly strapping fellows, both well on in life; the larger of the two was disfigured by the traces of the small-pox. They were Mahomedans, of course, as no Hindoo would adopt a trade which obliged him to spill the blood of a cow.

"These four were dressed in dirty-white clothes. The fifth, likewise a Mussulman, wore the red uniform of the Maharajah's body-guard, and is reported to have been the sweetheart of the Begum. He was called Survur Khan,

and passed for a native of some distant province. A bystander remarked that he had hair on his hands.

"The Sepoys were bidden to fall on. Half-a-dozen among them advanced and discharged their muskets through the windows at the ceiling of the apartments. Thereupon the five men entered. It was the short gloam-



MOSQUE IN CAWNPORE.

ing of Hindostan—the hour when ladies take their evening drive. She who had accosted the officer was standing in the doorway; with her were the native doctor and two Hindoo menials. That much of the business might be seen from the verandah, but all else was concealed amidst the interior gloom. Shrieks and scuffling acquainted those without that the journeymen were earning their

hire. Survur Khan soon emerged with his sword broken off at the hilt. He procured another from the Nana's house, and a few minutes after appeared again on the same errand. The third blade was of better temper, or perhaps the thick of the work was already over. By the time darkness had closed in the men came forth and locked up the house for the night. Then the screams ceased, but the groans lasted till morning.

"The sun rose as usual. When he had been up nearly three hours, the five men repaired to the scene of their labours over-night. They were attended by a few sweepers, who proceeded to transfer the contents of the house to a dry well situated behind some trees which grew hard by. 'The bodies,' says one who was present throughout, 'were dragged out, most of them by the hair of the head. Those who had clothes worth taking were stripped. Some of the women were alive—I cannot say how many, but three could speak. They prayed for the sake of God that an end might be put to their sufferings. I remarked one very stout woman, a half-caste, who was severely wounded in both arms, and who entreated to be killed. She and two or three others were placed against the bank of the cut by which bullocks go down in drawing water. The dead were first thrown in. Yes, there was a great crowd looking on; they were standing along the walls of the compound. They were principally city people and villagers. Yes, there were also Sepoys. Three boys were alive; they were fair children; the eldest, I think, must have been six or seven, and the youngest five years. They were running

round the well (where else could they go to ?), and there were none to save them. No, none said a word or tried to save them.' At length the smallest of them made an infantile attempt to get away. The little thing had been frightened past bearing by the murder of one of the surviving ladies. He thus attracted the observation of a native, who flung him and his companions down the well. One deponent is of opinion that the man first took the trouble to kill the children ; others think not. The corpses of the gentlemen must have been committed to the same receptacle, for a townsman who looked over the brink fancied that there was 'a Sahib uppermost.'

On that day (16th July) Havelock fought the battle of Cawnpore, and the broken rebels fled in every direction. Sick at heart, the Nana turned his back on the scene of his brief authority, but, ere entering the barge that lay awaiting him, the ruffian ordered the murder of a poor young mother then recovering from the pangs of childbirth.

On the 17th July our victorious troops entered Cawnpore. This is what they saw at the slaughter-house. An officer writes :—" I am not exaggerating when I tell you that the soles of my boots were more than covered with the blood of these poor wretched creatures. Portions of their dresses, collars, children's socks, and ladies' round hats, lay about saturated with their blood ; and in the sword-cuts on the wooden pillars of the room long dark hair was sticking, carried by the edge of the weapon, and there hung their tresses—a most painful sight."

Many such letters I could add, but the above, one of the

mildest in its tenor, will suffice. Small wonder that our soldiers divided amongst them the flowing locks of one poor murdered girl, and swore that for every hair of her head a Sepoy should die.



AFFGHAN OFFICER.

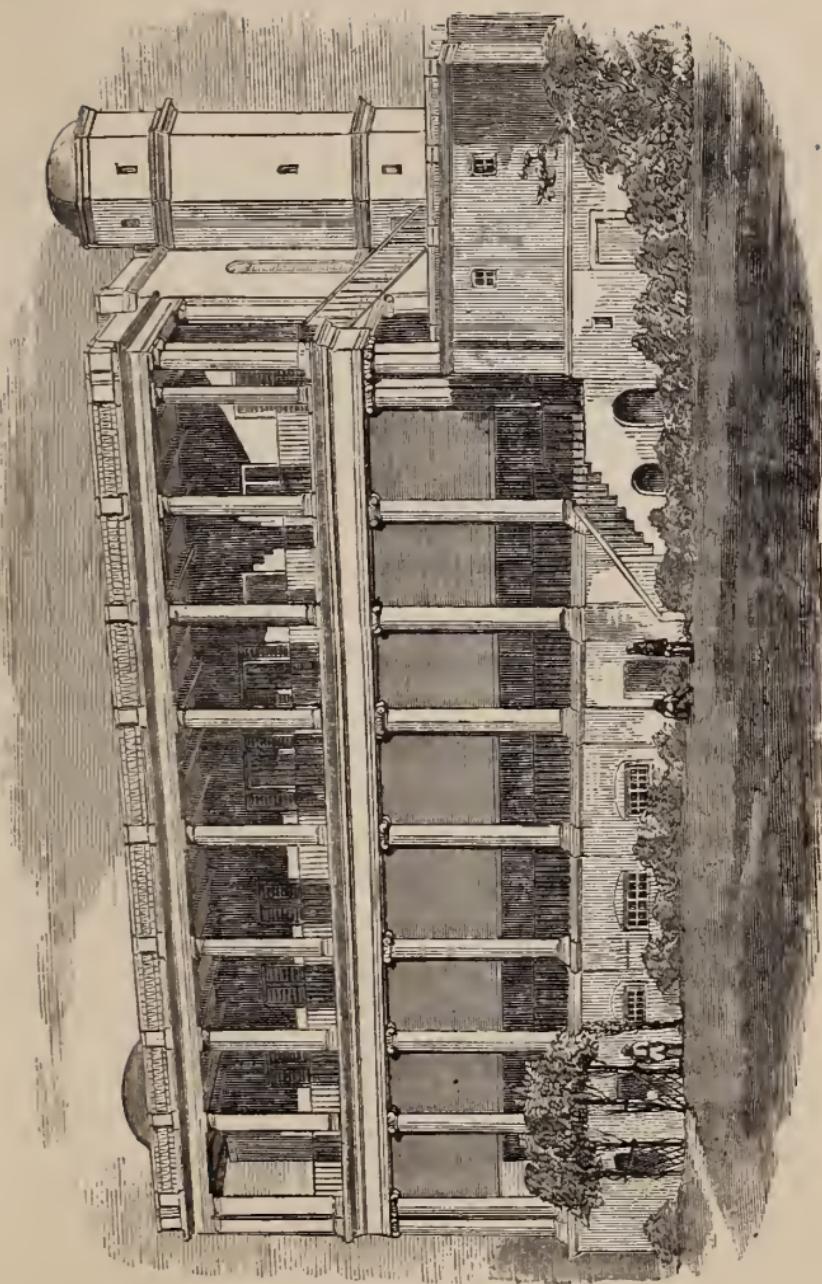


CHAPTER XX.

Lucknow, and the Re-establishment of Order.

X NOW pass on to Lucknow, the capital of the lately annexed kingdom of Oude, where Sir Henry Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner, had placed the Residency and a wide enclosure round it in a state of defence shortly after the open mutiny of the Sepoys at the cantonment, distant four miles from the city, on the 30th May, 1857. It would require far more space than I have at my command to enter into all the military movements of this celebrated siege, and I shall therefore confine myself to a sketch of the chief events that transpired within the walls of the Residency.

Surrounded by mutineers on every side, the British still retained possession of the city, but on the 29th June Sir Henry Lawrence received information that a large rebel force was encamped a few miles distant on the Fyzabad road. He determined to attack them, and, starting on the following morning with seven hundred men and eleven guns, fell into an ambush near Chinhut, and was compelled to retire before an overwhelming force of the enemy.



THE RESIDENCY, LUCKNOW.

Weakened by losses, the Chief Commissioner determined to abandon all outworks. An enormous quantity of ammunition was accordingly destroyed, and the whole of the European population retired to the Residency. This took place on the day following the Chinhut disaster, and from that day (1st July) the siege of Lucknow may be said to have commenced in earnest. But a great disaster early befel the defenders of Lucknow. On the 2nd of July Sir Henry Lawrence was mortally wounded by a shell bursting in his room, and died two days afterwards. I have said but little of this gallant gentleman, whose loss was deplored throughout the length and breadth of India; let me therefore make an extract from *Frazer's Magazine*, No. 336.

"Sir Henry Lawrence had that rare and happy faculty of attaching to himself every one with whom he came in contact. He had that gift which is never acquired—a gracious, winning, noble manner; rough and ready as he was in the field, his manner in private life had an indescribable charm of frankness, grace, and even courtly dignity. He had that virtue which Englishmen instinctively and characteristically love—a lion-like courage. He had that fault which Englishmen so readily forgive, and, when mixed with what are felt to be its naturally concomitant good qualities, they almost admire—a hot and impetuous temper. He had in overflowing measure that Godlike grace which even the base revere and the good acknowledge as the crown of virtue—the grace of charity."

Before his death this great man appointed Brigadier

Inglis his military successor, and conferred the Chief Commissionership of Oude upon Major Banks. Upon his tomb is inscribed the following modest epitaph—"Here lies Sir Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty. May God have mercy on him."

Pent up within the walls of the Residency were about nine hundred Europeans and seven hundred loyal natives, and for twelve long weeks they were assailed by the unremitting fire of a relentless enemy. Overwork, bad provisions, cholera, fever, dysentery, and the bullet, all contributed to reduce their scanty number, yet they heroically held out. Captain Anderson says, "Every day became more and more tedious, and good old faces began to disappear gradually and gradually each day ; here, a week before, you saw fourteen men laughing together ; to-day, the number had dwindled down to ten ; a day or so more, and you remarked *one* less, then another, and another, till you were positively afraid to ask for a friend. I have seen men in hospital, and have left them doing exceedingly well ; I have sent them books to read, &c., &c. ; and, on going a day or so after, I have found another sick or wounded man in my friend's cot, and have been told by a patient that 'the gentleman who lay *there* was buried last night.'

"Sad, sad indeed is the feeling one experiences on such occasions ; each man, as he parts for the night, has considerable doubts as to seeing his friend in the morning. A friend comes in and says, 'Have you heard the news ?' You say No, and he continues—'Poor So-and-so was

looking out of a loophole and was shot ; young So-and-so was hit last night by a round shot, which carried away both his legs, and there is no hope for him ; but the worst of all is, that So-and-so was hit by a round shot, and the whole of the back of his head was carried away, the skull was quite empty, and the poor fellow's brains were dashed all about a gun close to which he was standing.' "

And during these long weeks the history of the women and children was merely a repetition of the sufferings at Cawnpore. Huddled together in shot-riddled buildings, ill-fed, scantily clothed, bereft of all the decencies of life, they tended the sick, and ministered to each other's minor necessities with a heroism beyond all praise. Little babies—"siege babies"—were brought into the world during this troubled period, their lullaby the scream of the angry shell and the thunder of the rebel canon. Some survived ; others, dropping to rest, were spared further suffering. And in addition to sickness, wounds, and privation, the garrison were tormented by a plague of flies. Mr. Rees says, "They daily increased to such an extent that we at last began to feel life to be irksome, more on their account than from any other of our numerous troubles. In the day flies, at night mosquitoes. But the latter were bearable, the former intolerable. Lucknow had always been noted for its flies, but at no time had they been known to be so troublesome. The mass of putrid matter that was allowed to accumulate, the rains, the commissariat stores, the hospital, had attracted these insects in incredible numbers. The Egyptians could not possibly have been

more molested than we were by this pest. They swarmed in millions, and though we blew daily some hundreds of thousands into the air, this seemed to make no diminution in their numbers. The ground was still black with them, and the tables were literally covered with these cursed flies."

Into the numerous attacks gallantly repelled, or the rebel attempts at destroying the garrison by mines, I cannot enter; day and night was one long struggle against an untiring foe. On the 25th of July a spy entered with a note from Havelock's force, bidding the little band be of good cheer, for succour would reach them in a few days. But two weary months were to drag away their slow length before the promised relief arrived.

After taking Cawnpore, Havelock had transported his troops across the Ganges, bent on relieving Lucknow; but at each step his force was assailed by an overwhelming mass of rebels. From Cawnpore to Lucknow is only fifty miles, but between the British and the later city lay 30,000 Sepoys, and the Nana's army menaced the rear. Cholera broke out in the ranks, and reduced the fighting men to less than a thousand. Advance was impossible, and, inwardly chafing at the delay, Havelock was compelled to await for reinforcements, though not in idleness, for he cut up and dispersed bands of rebels in every direction. But the 15th of September brought Sir James Outram and seventeen hundred Europeans. By right the latter general should have assumed the command, "but," as is stated in Sir Hope Grant's journal, "with a generosity which was

the brightest characteristic of the ‘Bayard of India,’ he waived his rank as superior to that of Havelock, now created a Major-General, and served as a private in the Volunteer Horse, resolving that the honour of relieving Lucknow should be reaped by one who had already fought so gallantly towards the attainment of that object.”

Four days afterwards the British again crossed the Ganges in the teeth of the enemy; on the 23rd of September they arrived within six miles of Lucknow and stormed the Alum Bagh, defeating 10,000 rebels; and, taking a day of sorely needed rest, they attacked the city (25th September), and after many hours of desperate street fighting, in which noble Neill fell, the Residency was relieved, and Havelock and Outram marched into the enclosure at the head of their sadly diminished band.

Such was the *first* relief of Lucknow, which has been justly termed only a relief in name, for the countless rebel hordes again drew round the city and the siege recommenced. On the 26th September Sir James Outram assumed the command, not of the wide district to which he was named, but of the Residency; for the relievers and those they came to release were now hemmed in, and nought remained but to hold out until fresh European troops arrived and swept away the besiegers.

But by this date Delhi had been captured, and the troops employed in its reduction could be moved elsewhere. Sir Colin Campbell, now commander-in-chief, was on his way to India, and, as a Hindoo quaintly expressed it, “the very sea seemed vomiting up red-coats.” On the 9th of

November Sir Colin left Cawnpore with a mixed force of about 4000 men, and, fighting his way onward day by day arrived by the evening of the 15th within three miles of Lucknow. On the following day the assault was made, and the perusal of its details will well repay any reader who loves to hear of British pluck and endurance. Mr. Rees, speaking of the attack on a strongly fortified building called the Secundrabagh, says, "A small breach had been effected in one of the walls, and only a small body could rush in at once. Fortunately, the enemy had expected to be attacked from quite a different quarter, and the breach was in one of the most weakly guarded points. Our men could therefore come in in considerable numbers before the insurgent guard could be reinforced. Still heaps fell. Yet our men dashed in as quickly as the narrow breach permitted, but that was not fast enough for their ardour. They went under the very loopholes of the enemy, and, cunningly lying down while the insurgents let fly a volley at the caps fixed on their bayonets, which our men put up as a target for the time being, they, as soon as the enemy's fire was exhausted, and before they could load again, tore down the iron bars, broke up the barricades, and jumped down from the windows in the garden wall.

"The enemy resisted desperately, but vainly, against their fury. Not less than 2000 dead bodies were counted next day. The slaughter had been terrific, and the gateway, the principal room, and the side chamber were literally inundated with blood, and piled with the dead and dying. No mercy was shown ; and if some wretch had—as, how-

ever, was rarely the case—cowardice enough to throw down his arms and sue for pardon, none was given him. ‘Cawnpore’ was hissed into the ear of every one of the rebels before a thrust of the bayonet put an end to his existence.”

On the following day (17th) the meeting between the four generals—a joyful reunion that the talent of Mr. Barker has rendered historical—took place, and I cannot refrain from extracting the following anecdote of Havelock from the pages of Mr. Rees :—“ Sir Colin Campbell received the hearty thanks and congratulations of Sir James with evident satisfaction ; and General Havelock, not less delighted and proud, harangued the troops, who had so gallantly carried out all the commander-in-chief’s brilliant manœuvres, in that concise and yet soul-stirring language for which he was so well known by his soldiers. While yet speaking, his attention was drawn to the place where his only son had just fallen, wounded a second time by a musket ball from the enemy. Though his father’s heart must have been then bleeding with anguish and beating with curiosity to know the nature of the wound, the general, with wonderful self-command, continued his discourse without interruption, and then only, amidst the cheers of the men, who were unacquainted with the sad event which had just happened, left to visit his wounded son. Fortunately it was only a slight wound, and he soon recovered from the effects of it.”

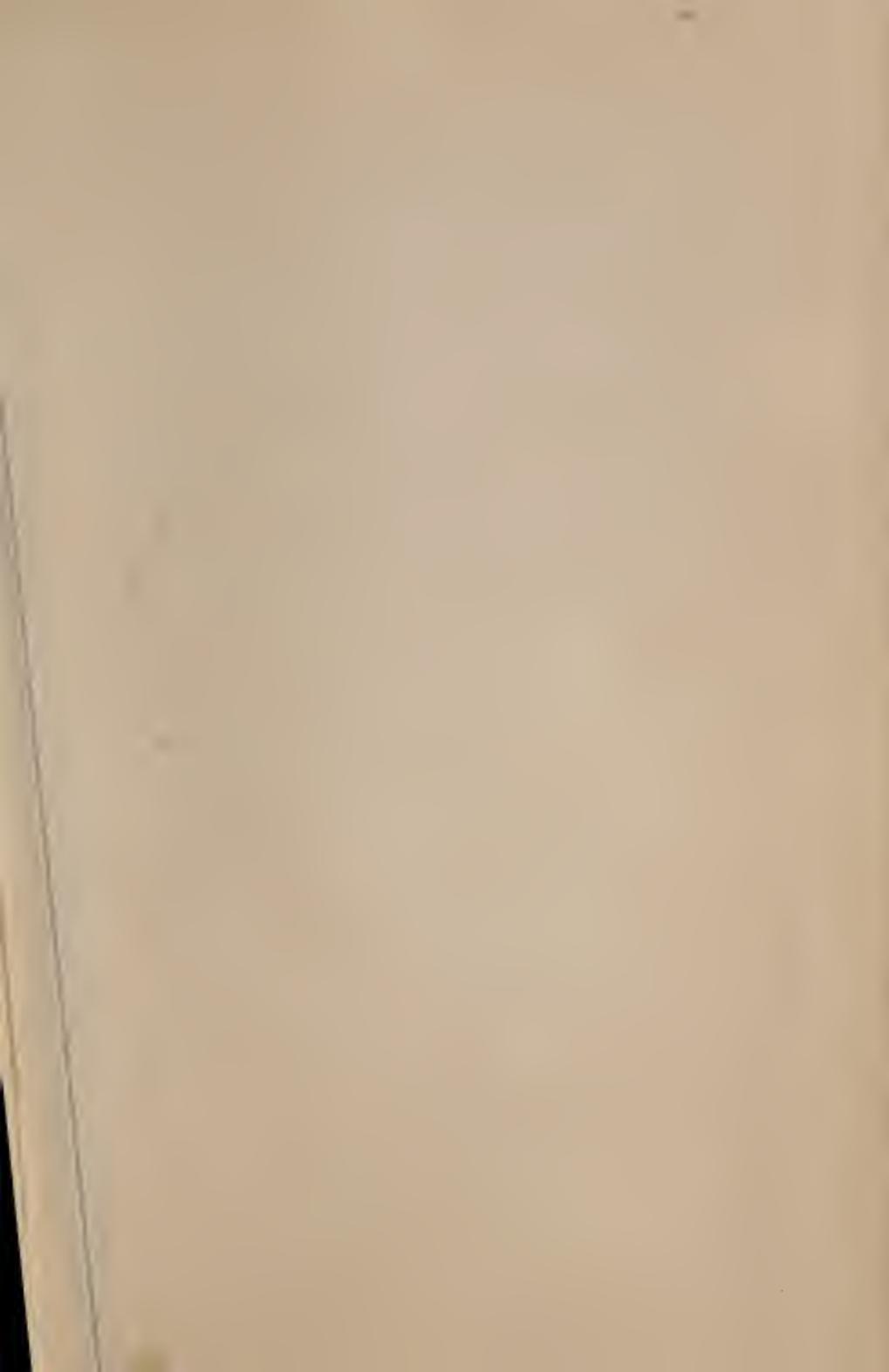
This brief sketch is now drawing to a close, for with the relief of Lucknow the back of the mutiny may be said to

have been fairly broken. To enumerate all the minor outbreaks that took place in May and the following three months would require a large volume, and I do not pretend to give anything beyond a rough and imperfect account of the most prominent events during this crisis. By the tact and determination of Sir John Lawrence and his able supporters, matters went on smoothly in the Punjab, but from the second relief of Lucknow the history of the revolt becomes one intricate record of the marches and counter-marches of small bodies of our troops in pursuit of the broken rebels. On the 1st of November, 1858, the governing power of our Eastern Empire was transferred from the Company to Victoria, Empress of India. Under the just and equitable sway of enlightened officials, aided by the lapse of years, the memory of this terrible conflict has been lost in renewed kindness of feeling between the Europeans and the inhabitants of Hindostan. That such friendly relations may grow in strength is, I think, the wish of all ; and no wiser measure for its promotion could possibly have been devised than the visit to India by the heir-apparent, who, even as I write, is experiencing the munificent hospitality of the chiefs of nations over which he will some day be called to reign.

INDEX.

- ABLUTIONS, 92.
Abstinence from alcoholic drinks, 41.
Adam's Peak, Ceylon, 192.
Adoption of children, 132.
Agra, 179.
Ahmedabad, 175.
Alligators, valley of, 168.
Alum Bagh, storming of, 285.
Amritsur, city of, 166.
Architecture, Hindoo, 147.
BAGAVATTA, 11.
Banyan Trees, (*cuts*) 29, 30.
Baroda, 176.
Benares, 184; interior of temple at, (*cut*) 185; during the mutiny, 241.
Bengal, 185.
Betel, 87.
Bombay, (*cut*) 190.
Boundaries of India, 10, 23.
Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu, (*cut*) 55.
Brahmo-Somâj, 159.
Brahmin, Warrior, and Sudra, (*cut*) 35.
Brahmin saying his prayers, (*cut*) 43.
Brahmins, fabled origin of, 51, 52; their exalted rank, 45; great influence, 81; education, 85; marriage, 87; promises made to, 90; language of, 103; their dress, 103; as soldiers, 211, 213.
Brahminism, 52.
Buddhism, 53, 54.
Bundelcund, 184.
Burmese young lady, (*cut*) 101.
Burning the dead, 130.
British rule in India, 208.
CALCUTTA, 185; Government House, (*cut*) 186; view of, in 1845, (*cut*) 187; during the mutiny, 236; bazaar in, (*cut*) 237.
Calicut, king of, 17.
Campbell, Sir Colin, 285.
Candy, 192.
Cashmere, 25, 165.
Caste, 35, 46, 50.
Cattle, sacred, (*cut*) 89.
Cawnpore, mutiny at, 250; siege of, 254; scene of massacre at, (*cut*) 270, 274; mosque at; (*cut*) 274; battle of, 276.
Ceremonies, 37, 59, 93.
Ceylon, 191; products, 195; inhabitants, 196; religion, 196; wild animals, 197.
Chastity, punishment for loss of, 47.
Cheetah, (*cut*) 117.
Chinhut, battle of, 278.
Chronology, 11.
Cleanliness, want of, 41.
Climate, 24, 27, 95.
Cocoa-nut palm grove, (*cut*) 194.
Commerce of India, 207.
Cows, reverence paid to, 64, (*cut*) 67, 68.
Cremation, 130.
DAOITS, or robbers, 99.
Dancing-girl, (*cut*) 83.
Date palms, (*cut*) 49.
“Dawk,” travelling, (*cut*) 115, (*cut*) 116.
Deccau, the, 189.
Delhi, 180, 183; mutineers at, 222; siege of, 229; king of, captured, 232.
Deluge, traditions respecting the, 51.
Devotees, 56.
Diaz, Bartholomew, 12.
Discovery of India by Portuguese, 13, 15.
Doctors, 82, 140.
Drama, the Indian, 143.
Dutch, the, in India, 19.
EARLY historic records, 10.
Earrings, (*cut*) 105.
East India Company, 21.
Education of the Brahmins, 86.
Elephants, 197 (*cuts*) 198, 201; hunting, 200; memory of, 200.
English first established in India, 20.
Exports of India, 150.
FAIRS, Indian, 134.
Fakirs, 30, 77, (*cut*) 78, 168.
Farmers, 110.
Feast of New Moon, (*cut*) 136; of lamps, 139; of the goddess Kali, (*cut*) 141; various feasts, 137.
Fertility of interior, 24.
Festivals, 134.
Funeral ceremonies, 131.
Future state, 69.
GAMES, Hindoo, 114.
Ganges, the, 23, 29.
Geographical description of India, 23, 154.
Ghauts, 147.
Goa, 190.
Golconde, 185.
Gurus, or priests, 63, 73.
HAND-MILL, Oriental, (*cut*) 111.
Hands, right and left, 92.
Havelock, Sir Henry, 276, 284.
Heaven and hell, Hindoos' idea of, 69, 71.
Himalayas, scene in, (*cut*) 24; climate of, 25.
Hindoos, traits of, 95, 98, 112, 113; complexion of, 102.
Hindoo Temple, entrance to, (*cut*) 178.
Hooghly, the, 186.
Houses, dwelling, 107, 110, 113.
Hunting, 117.
Husband and wife, 119.

- Hyderabad, 175.
 INDIAN army, organisation of, 211; strength of, 214.
 Indus, the, 162; banks of, (*cut*) 163.
 Islamism, 53.
 JAINISM, 53, 55.
 Juggernaut, 177; Temple at, (*cut*) 62.
 Jugglers, 151.
 Jung Bahador, 238.
 KALI, goddess, 38.
 Kootub Minar, (*cut*) 181.
 Krishna, 177.
 Kumaon, 189.
 Kurrahee, town of, 172.
 LADY of Burmah, young, (*cut*) 101.
 Lady of Southern India, 26.
 Lahore, street in, (*cut*) 109, 166.
 Lawrence, Sir H., 281.
 Lucknow, 278; siege of, 281; relief of, 285.
 MADRAS, 189.
Mahâbhârata, the, 11, 144.
 Malabar, 191.
 Maldives, the, 191.
 Mandu, water-palace at, (*cut*) 148.
 Manufactures, 149, 165.
 Marriage customs, 37, 42, 48, 118.
 Mausoleum, Mahomet Shah's, (*cut*) 132.
 Medicine, 82, 140.
 Menn's Code, 45.
 Metempsychosis, 55, 64.
 Monkey worship, 58.
 Monsoons, 27.
 Mooltan, 167; street in, (*cut*) 169.
 Music, Indian, 144.
 Mussulmans, 53.
 Mutiny, the Sepoy, 210; beginning of, 215; at Meerut, 219; at Delhi, 222; at Benares, 242; at Allahabad, 244; at Cawnpore, 250; at Lucknow, 278; suppressed, 288.
 NANA SAHIB, (*cut*) 250; position of, 251; his treachery, 253; his cruelty, 258.
 Nanekism, 53.
 Natives, description of, 34; types of, (*cut*) 38.
 Népaul, 189.
 Nomadic tribes, 152.
 OODIPOOR, 177.
 Ondh, 184.
 Ontram, Sir James, 284.
 PAINTING, Indian, 147.
 Pagoda, Hindoo, (*cut*) 80.
 Palace, Indian, (*cut*) 109; palaces, 148.
 Palanquins, 114, (*cut*) 115.
 Palm trees, (*cuts*) 49, 194, 195.
 Pahvâhdam, ceremony of, 59.
 Paranas, the, 144.
 Pariah, 36, 46, 48.
 Parsees, 155; lady and son, (*cnt*) 157.
- Patna, (*cut*) 173, 175.
 Pearl Mosque, the, 179.
 Pedrotalagalla, Ceylon, 192.
 Peer Munga, 168.
 Peshawur, 167.
 Peshawur Guide, (*cut*) 231.
 Poetry, Hindoo, 143.
 Polygamy, 121, 132.
 Pongol, feast of the, 139.
 Pooree, 177.
 Population, 32, 154.
 Portuguese explorations, 12, 19.
 Prayers, 82, 92, 94.
 Prester John, 13.
 Priests, 63, 73; power of, 75.
 Productions of India, 24.
 Punjab, the, 166.
 RAILWAYS in India, 206.
 Rainy season, 27.
 Rajahpootras, 97.
Râmâyana, the, 11, 144.
 Religions of India, 11, 52; the Christian religion in India, 208.
 Right-hand and left-hand sects, 44.
 Robbers, 36, 99, 172.
 SALUTATIONS, 111, 112.
 Schools, Indian, (*cut*) 100; of Brahmins, 185.
 Scinde, 167; chief towns in, 175.
 Serpent charmers, (*cut*) 31.
 Sculpture, Indian, 147.
 Serpent worship, (*cut*) 58.
 Sikhs, the, 53, 165; trooper, (*cut*) 212.
 Siva, (*cut*) 55, 56; worshippers of, 62.
 Slavery, domestic, 150.
 Sorcerers, 84.
 Story-tellers, 153.
 Sudras, 36, 48.
 Surat, 176.
 Suttees, 121, 129.
 TALIPAT Palm, (*cut*) 195.
 Taj Mahal, the, 180.
 Temperature of India, 23.
 Temples, Indian, (*cut*) 146, 175; (*cut*) 178.
 Thibet, 27; Grand Lama of, 54.
 Thugs, 38, 99.
 Towns, chief, in India, 166.
 Transmigration, 55, 64.
 Travelling, (*cut*) 114.
 Trincomalee, 195.
 Types of Natives, (*cut*) 38.
 VASCO DE GAMA, 14.
 Vedas, the, 88, 144.
 Verandah, Oriental, (*cut*) 108.
 Vishnu, (*cut*) 55, 56; (*cut*) 57; worshippers of, 58.
 WATER-PALACE, Mandu, (*cut*) 148.
 Weaving, 165.
 Widows, 119.
 Wild animals, 24, (*cut*) 33.



100

DS413 .E22
India, historical and descriptive

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00046 3580